

Hafa Adai!

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

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INSIDE

NATION



A judge says the NSA's collection of phone records likely violates the Constitution. **> PAGE 15**

ASIA



The U.S. and Philippines agree to restore a veterans cemetery in Clark. **> PAGE 16**

LIFE & STYLE



Beyonce's new album sells more than 600,000 in its first three days. **> PAGE 20**

THE CNMI'S FIRST
DAILY NEWSPAPER

By SGT. EDWARD SIGUENZA
1-294TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

CAMP PHOENIX, Afghanistan—Operation Enduring Freedom is quickly coming to a close for the Guam Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment.

Task Force Guam's first wave of troops departed Afghanistan today and will soon return to U.S. soil to commence a redeployment process. Overall, Guam will depart Afghanistan in clusters, with its final push

See **SOLDIERS** on **Page 4**

Afghanistan exodus: Guam soldiers begin departure

Capt. Thomas Babauta, right, behavioral health officer for Task Force Guam, 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment, Guam Army National Guard, tosses a bag to Staff Sgt. Jeff D. Kosaka prior to leaving Camp Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan, recently. Babauta and Kosaka are part of the first wave of Guam soldiers that departed Afghanistan as Task Force Guam concludes its historic Operation Enduring Freedom mission.

SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA

Kilili eyes CW extension to 2019

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Besides asking long-term legal aliens to help the CNMI "get through the transition period," Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (Ind-MP) also said yesterday he now has reason to believe that U.S. Labor Secretary Thomas Perez's anticipated decision would be to extend the transitional Commonwealth-only worker program beyond Dec. 31, 2014.

Here's the bargain: If you stay and help us get through the transition, you can apply to get a U.S. green card.

» **US Senate panel markup on bill to extend CW, E2C, asylum exemption for 5 years**
» **Delegate slams petition to 'send all foreign workers home' after 2014**

A U.S. Senate bill that Sablan drafted will be marked up on Thursday, extending the federal immigration transition period only up to 2019.

That revised version of the bipartisan S. 1237 would also extend the E2-C program for long-term

See **KILILI** on **Page 4**

Rotary honors 3 with Everyday Hero awards

By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

For risking their lives to save others from drowning, three individuals were hon-

ored yesterday by the Rotary Club of Saipan during its last meeting of the year at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Rotary Club president Laila Y. Boyer presented Everyday Hero Award plaques

to physician assistant Keith Leonard Longiski, businessman Ian Morrell, and Justin Hunter for putting themselves in harm's way to save another life.

See **ROTARY** on **Page 4**



'Red Mazda pickup used in Happy Market robbery'

» **Crime Stoppers offers up to \$1,000 reward for information**

By FERGIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The three masked men who attacked a security guard during a robbery at Happy Market in As Lito used a red Mazda pickup truck with no tailgate as their getaway vehicle, according to NMI Crime Stoppers coordinator Jason Tarkong yesterday.

Tarkong said the security guard told police that the suspects parked the pickup truck next to the trash bin located outside the store building.

Tarkong also announced that the NMI Crime Stoppers Program is offering up to \$1,000 cash reward for any information that will lead to the arrest of the suspect or suspects.

See **ROBBERY** on **Page 4**

MARK RABAGO

Ian Morrell, third from left, and Keith Leonard Longiski, third from right, pose with Rotary Club of Saipan officials and Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan after receiving their Everyday Hero Award yesterday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Saipan World Resort donates \$10K to public schools. PAGE 2
PSS on CUC suit: No funding to pay utility arrears. PAGE 5

Local

Saipan World Resort donates \$10K to public schools

» **'\$1M target for CTE expansion aimed to achieve in 2014'**

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Officials of the Public School System led by Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan and Board of Education chair Herman T. Guerrero received yesterday a \$10,000 donation from Saipan World Resort and the money will be used to expand the system's career technology education program, which prepares the island's high school students for various career options after graduation.

The amount is so far the biggest educational tax credit donation received by the system this year.

In a brief ceremony at the hotel yesterday, education officials received the \$10,000 check from Saipan World Resort president and general manager Hyung Cho Kim, director Jake Park, human resource manager Miriam Seman, and sales manager Mike Babauta—who all expressed the company's sup-

port for the mission and vision of public schools. Sablan said the donation is a great Christmas present for public school students. Education officials and representatives of the Saipan World Resort gather for a group photo during the turnover ceremony yesterday at the hotel. The Public School System was chosen to receive the hotel's community outreach donation of \$10,000 for the expansion and enhancement of the system's career technology education program. Officials present in yesterday's ceremony included State Board of Education chair Herman T. Guerrero, Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan, PSS finance director Derek Sasamoto, PSS financial consultant Ed Tenorio, Saipan World Resort president and general manager Hyung Cho Kim, director Jake Park, human resource manager Miriam Seman, and sales manager Mike Babauta.

port for the mission and vision of public schools.

Sablan said the donation is a great Christmas present for public school students.

She said the money will be used entirely for the planned enhancement of the CTE program. She disclosed that the check will be added to the ex-

isting CTE bank account, which already has over \$100,000.

According to Sablan, the planned enhancement and expansion for the CTE program will require \$1 million to realize. She is optimistic that the target amount will be achieved by 2014.

CTE is the former vocational education program of PSS. It was expanded to offer more clusters, thus benefiting more students. Among the subjects offered under the CTE program are nursing assistantship, tourism and hospitality, computer technology, automotive, agriculture, business education, and culinary arts. These are available in public secondary schools and selected middle schools.

Sablan described the CTE program as a "very expensive" program that requires costly equipment and supplies. Most of the materials are also not found on island and must be procured from outside the CNMI.

"CTE is a very expensive program. We have to definitely invest in equipment and supplies and most often materials are difficult to purchase on island," she told *Saipan Tribune*,

citing as an example the medical tools and equipment for the nursing assistantship program and the culinary arts classes.

Saipan Tribune learned that PSS uses both local and federal monies to sustain the CTE program. However, because of the limited local resources for schools and the limited use of federal grants for this purpose, PSS continues to seek support from private groups and individuals to augment the needs of the program.

Sablan disclosed that they sustain the program through the CW fees (contract worker's fees) provided to PSS and a portion from the federal consolidated grant each year.

"Under our proposal, it will cost \$1 million for us to put in place all these things (expansion and enhancement) and we're doing our campaign here in the CNMI. As of today, we have \$100,000-plus in our CTE bank account and we hope to achieve the \$1 million goal by next year," she said.

Many students have already benefited since the implementation of the CTE program, Sablan said. She cited students who took

part in the nursing assistantship program, who go on to pursue a nursing degree at the Northern Marianas College and then land jobs at the public hospital.

PSS' culinary arts classes have also yielded positive responses as many students have been inspired to further their studies and return to serve the islands' hotels and restaurants.

This year, Sablan said, PSS expanded its business education by offering finance and accounting classes in middle schools.

According to Saipan World Resort's HR manager Miriam Seman, yesterday's donation is just part of a series of donations that the company plans to do this year. Today, another donation is scheduled for the United Filipino Organization, which raises funds for the survivors of Typhoon Haiyan that devastated the Philippines last month.

In a survey conducted by PSS two years ago, students in public high schools expressed interest in pursuing careers in health science, finance, and agriculture, food and natural resources, which are among the many clusters now being offered by the CTE program.



MONETH G. DEPOSA

NEWBORN HEARING SCREENING PROGRAM



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Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation

Printing is funded by the Cooperative Agreement for the Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI) Tracking, Surveillance and Integration.



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

MHS PTSA meeting on Thursday

All Marianas High School parents, guardians, and students are urged to attend the MHS PTA meeting this Thursday Dec. 19, at 6pm in the MHS cafeteria. We will get an update on MHS events and prioritize the list of MHS campus improvements. After the meeting, walk over to get a seat at the Thespians' performance of

A Christmas Carol in the Dolphin Theatre at 7pm. (PR)

1,649 unemployed registrants yet to complete résumé

The CNMI Department of Labor will be sending electronic notices to email addresses on record to all 1,649 individuals identified in the system as not having a complete résumé. A complete résumé online will al-

low you to electronically view, apply for job openings, and also allow employers to view your résumé and contact you. All individuals who receive such notices are encouraged to contact the CNMI Department of Labor, Division of Employment Services at 664-3190 or 322-0996 or go online at www.marianaslabor.net to access your account and complete the required information. (DOL)

'New leadership program will help CNMI in long run'

By **MARK RABAGO**
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Former Honolulu mayor Mufi Hannemann believes the recently launched Marianas Chapter of the Pacific Century Fellows Program will, in the long run, help the Commonwealth.

Speaking before members of the Society for Human Resources Management-NMI Chapter's monthly meeting last Friday at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan, Hannemann said PCF Marianas Chapter is a non-profit organization that will specialize in leadership development and community service.

"It's very important because it's something that will help the CNMI in the long run because it's all about focusing on solutions on the challenges that face the Commonwealth. It's all about developing a network of young leaders who after our second, third, fourth, and fifth year will continue to get together and continue to identify opportunities for community involvement, public service, and I really believe the response that we got so far indicates to me that we're on the right path," he said in an interview with *Saipan Tribune*.

As part of the program, those selected in the first batch of the PCF Marianas Chapter will have the opportunity to travel to Hawaii where they will meet leaders and businessmen.

Based on the Pacific Century Fellows Program in Hawaii and modeled after the national White House Fellows program, PCF Marianas Chapter intends to develop and bring together strong community leaders to strategically tackle some of the CNMI's most pressing matters.

Hannemann himself was a

beneficiary of the White House Fellows program in the 1980s.

"I'm eternally grateful to the Reagan administration and in particular former vice president George Herbert Walker Bush for giving me the opportunity to work at his office for a year. He did it in a nonpartisan fashion, which is missing in Washington today. He didn't hold it against me that I was a member of another party and I benefitted from it. I hold him in high esteem and the fellows program is a wonderful program."

Hannemann said the local program is very timely since the region where the CNMI belongs to continues to be ignored by the powers-that-be in the United States.

"We're in an area which is often neglected, ignored by rest of the U.S. and the world and I've always felt that the Pacific-Asian basin, the islands that represent Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia are very important and they have a contribution to make and they have something to say. That's what I'm here to do. I'm here to bring out the potential and goodness of leadership that you have here."

Hannemann also had some advice for members of the SHRM, disposing of this through his "Muffi's Maxims" philosophy.

"I tried to make them realize the importance of fostering a good team. That it starts with leaders who are engaged in a good cause, and leaders who feel that they can't do it alone. The Muffi's Maxims that I showed them is based on my view and my experience working in government, the private sector, and non-profit organizations."

Hannemann also sub-



scribes to the "Pacific Way" that was coined by former Fiji prime minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara.

"He said we in the Pacific have a certain way of doing things and I've always felt that I followed this in whatever I've done in Hawaii, the rest of the United States, and throughout the world."

MARK RABAGO

Former Honolulu mayor Mufi Hannemann speaks about the newly launched Marianas Chapter of the Pacific Century Fellows Program during the Society for Human Resources Management-NMI Chapter's monthly meeting on Friday at the Pacific Islands Club Saipan.

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KILILI

From Page 1

foreign investors up to 2019, and ensure that the CNMI's exemption from accepting asylum applications will last until the end of the transition period.

The bill that's up for the U.S. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee's markup will require the U.S. Department of the Interior to work with the CNMI to help reduce utility rates on the islands, and the U.S. Government Accountability Office to aid the CNMI in the budgeting process to help avoid annual and cumulative deficits.

A revised version of S. 1237 is needed because some of its CNMI-specific provisions already became law in recent months, including a delay in the 2013 and 2015 minimum wage increase and conveying 3 miles of submerged lands to the CNMI.

'Values'

Sablan, a guest speaker at yesterday's Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at Hyatt Regency Saipan, also put a spotlight on an ongoing petition "that calls for sending all foreign workers back to where they came from by the end of next year," which he said is just the opposite of the Rotary Club's values of unity, compassion, and caring for others.

"People are looking for ways to divide us. Instead of believing that by working together, by co-operating, by helping each other

we can all do better in life—the Rotary values—these people are convinced that they lose when others succeed," Sablan told Rotary Club members and guests.

He said some people "feed the fire of fear that we all sometimes feel that we are being taken advantage of or are in danger of having something taken from us."

"Ironically, this fear is aimed at people who have added to the life and welfare of our community. People who have given, not taken away. People whose work and economic contribution will continue to be needed for years to come," he added.

The Northern Marianas Descendant Corp., which claims to represent thousands of indigenous people, is circulating a petition asking Congress to "reject" the inclusion in national immigration reform bills of any provision that would grant improved status to long-term legal aliens in the CNMI.

The same immigration bills—S. 744 and H.R. 15—provide a pathway to citizenship for some 11 million undocumented aliens in America.

This NMD Corp. petition addressed to Congress is separate from another petition it addressed to CNMI lawmakers, asking them to introduce a joint resolution to also oppose the CNMI provision in S. 744 and H.R. 15.

Sablan said this has produced a lively debate in the letters to the editor of local newspapers.

He said in the halls of Con-

gress, people are still debating the meaning of the U.S. Constitution and the Declaration of Independence over 200 years after the fact. It is thus not surprising that in the CNMI, there would still be debate on the meaning of the Covenant that established the Northern Marianas' political relationship with the United States approved less than 40 years ago.

"But philosophical debates sometimes have to give way to practical reality. And no matter what a document signed decades ago or centuries ago may mean, we have to ask ourselves what is best for our community today," he said.

Karl Reyes, a member of the NMD Corp. and a Rotary Club of Saipan member, in an interview after Sablan's presentation said that he always believes the world is "round, so everybody can stay anywhere they want as long as they follow the law."

When asked whether he thinks there would be 10,000 U.S. workers to fill up the jobs currently held by foreign workers, Reyes said, "Right now, I can't even find a job because I'm over 70 years old...They don't want to hire me because of my age. As long as a person can do it, hire."

'Bargain with foreign workers'

Sablan, who successfully inserted a provision granting pathway to improved status to long-term legal aliens in the CNMI in S. 744 and HR 15, said these bill

commander, said about the 508th. "We're providing as much information on how we operated as a task force so they can plan their operations. Every aspect, from our platoon sergeants to company commanders to special staff, is actively engaged in this transition."

The 508th will operate as Task Force 2-Fury, says Maj. Mike J. McDermott, executive officer. McDermott is part of an advanced team that arrived early December to start the transition.

"Task Force Guam is squared away," McDermott said. "We've been looking at their [standard operating pro-

cedures] and checking what needs to be changed. Honestly, we couldn't think of anything. That says a lot about the Guam National Guard."

This is the first time the 508th will replace a National Guard unit, McDermott explained. Unlike the 294th's strength of nearly 600 soldiers, Task Force 2-Fury will operate with about 400 troops and still show presence in the International Security Assistance Force's six regional commands, just like Guam.

"This is a totally different mission than what we've previously done," said McDermott. "But we're a very experienced battalion."

are seeking the public's help in getting information about the suspects.

"Please contact the Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272 should you want to remain anonymous or use our website at www.nmicrimestoppers.net," he said.

In an interview on Monday, Happy Market owner Huang Fang disclosed that one suspect, described as large and possibly local, was wearing a mask with a tiger design.

Fang said the two other suspects, described as both skinny, are possibly Chinese as the guard overheard them saying "Hurry up! Hurry up!" in Chinese.

Fang said she received a call from police to inform her about the robbery at 4:40am that same day.

"People who say we should get rid of special provisions for the Northern Marianas in national immigration law are saying: throw away that umbrella. Let's just all stand in the rain. Let's just all get soaked. I can't agree. I think we need to do what we can to make sure that, when the storm comes, when immigration reform passes Congress, the Northern Marianas has some protection. And when the storm has passed I want—what I think Rotary wants—is a community that is stronger and more prosperous than ever," he said.

CW extension

Sablan had always refrained from saying what the U.S. Labor secretary's decision would be, except that a decision would be made in January 2014. He had earlier requested that a decision be made by August 2013 to give CNMI employers and employees time to prepare.

In the past, he would only go so far to say he was not given a reason that the transition period would not be extended.

But yesterday, Sablan changed his tone, saying, "I actually may have reason to think that a decision would give us an extension."

Without an extension of the transitional CW program, the CNMI loses immediate access to some 10,000 skilled and profes-

sional foreign workers after Dec. 31, 2014, a time when the CNMI is far from having some 10,000 U.S. workers to fill up these jobs.

Sablan said even acting CNMI Labor secretary Edith DeLeon Guerrero stated that there are over 1,500 or so U.S. workers looking for jobs, compared to some 10,000 jobs currently held by some 10,000 workers.

Once the transition period is extended up to 2019, that gives the CNMI additional years to train as many U.S. workers as possible.

But Sablan said the CNMI cannot continue to be dependent on foreign workers forever, as he keeps pushing for training U.S. workers.

In a later interview, Sablan said some members of the CNMI Legislature claim of investors interested in investing millions and billions in the CNMI which he said is "good."

"Where are they going to get the workers? Do you really think those people are going to come in here, put that kind of money...if they know that they won't have the workforce after 2019? Do you really think they will do this?" he asked.

Sablan added that sending home 10,000 foreign workers will mean 10,000 less customers for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. and much higher rates than what customers now pay.

ROTARY

From Page 1

Longiski and Morrell were present to receive their awards.

Boyer said the local club and Rotary Club International are honored to bestow to them the awards.

"To put one in harm's way for the safety of others, for the display of courage that knows no bounds, and a heart that gave upon self, for the courageous act of saving a life, a true demonstration of service upon himself," read the plaques given to Longiski, Morrell, and Hunter.

Longiski was credited for saving the lives of Ricky and Jay Benavente who he towed to shore after the two almost drowned while spearfishing in Laolao Bay last Thanksgiving.

"Thank you very much. It's quite an honor. As they told the story I've only been on Saipan a very short time but I feel I've been embraced by the entire community, especially during the holiday season," Longiski said. "I'm just thankful that Ricky and Jay are with their families and experienced Thanksgiving as well as the Christmas and New Year celebrations coming up."

Rotary member Tom Thornborough, who has known Morrell since high school, said the retired U.S. Navy man helped rescue a girl in Laolao Bay early November.

"They've been in this place on East Bay at the eastern corner of Laolao Beach and they put down a little ladder they fashioned. They started jumping out

to the water using the ladder and come back up and swim in the ocean. Then some girls came by and they jumped in and one of them couldn't climb back under her own strength. She remained in the water for about an hour and a half, floating, and trying to get back up," Thornborough said.

That's when Morrell and two other individuals jumped into the water to keep the girl's head above the water line so she can keep breathing. The three also pinned themselves between the girl and the rocks so that she wouldn't get more scratches or bruises when the water came in.

"That was really a wonderful thing they did and after an hour and a half they had some help from DPS [Department of Public Safety] and they were able to finally pull the girl to safety. Even to this day we don't know the girl's name but she's alive and well and living on Saipan."

Morrell deflected all the praises, saying he was just one of three persons who saved the girl, adding that anyone would've done the same.

"Actually there were three of us who were involved in it and unfortunately the other two are not here today. We really don't look at it as something heroic necessarily. It's just something that we were ready to do," the owner and president of Typhoon Digital Productions said.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan, one of the speakers in yesterday's Rotary meeting, also came up on stage to personally congratulate the newly minted Everyday Hero award-ees of Rotary.

SOLDIERS

From Page 1

slated for late December.

"You can see everyone's excited and they should be. We've been here nine months and have been a very, very busy battalion," said Maj. Rickey M. Flores, Task Force Guam executive officer who's leading the first group out of the country. "There's still a lot that needs to be done before we finally make our way to Guam. But right now, this is an important day. We're starting to come home. We'll be with our families very soon."

Guam occupied various loca-

tions in Afghanistan and its exodus will take place at multiple terminals. In stages, Guam soldiers will unite at an American base in Europe before flying to Camp Shelby, Miss., for medical and administrative out-processing.

Likewise, Guam's replacement command—2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, United States Army—continues trickling into Afghanistan and will reach full strength by the time Guam officially transfers authority shortly after Christmas Day.

"They're our new best friends," Lt. Col. Michael Tougher, Task Force Guam

the other two were skinny.

Police officers saw that the store's front glass door had been shattered, cash registers were open, and several items were missing from the shelves.

Police learned from the victim and video surveillance camera that around 3:15 to 3:30am, the power to the building went off. The store was closed at that time.

The guard walked around the building to check the main switch panel box located on the northwest corner of the building.

The victim saw the red Mazda pickup truck parked next to the trash bin with one suspect inside the vehicle. The three suspects then approached the guard. The short and fat suspect hit the guard with a golf club on the

left shoulder, causing the victim to fall down. The suspect then hit the guard's head, causing the guard to lose consciousness. He awoke later after the store had already been ransacked.

Tarkong said the stolen items include 20 cartons of Doral Slims, 20 cartons of Doral Menthol Lights, two cartons of Regular Lights, 15 cartons of Pall Mall Green, five cartons of Pall Mall Blue, two cartons of Pall Mall Red, five cartons of Doral Red, and 18 cartons of Doral Green.

The total amount of the stolen cigarettes is estimated at over \$2,800. In addition, \$7,900 in cash was taken from the cash registers.

Tarkong said that DPS and NMI Crime Stoppers Program

ROBBERY

From Page 1

He said that Department of Public Safety police officers and emergency medical services personnel responded to Happy Market on Friday at 3:39am, where they met the 43-year-old Bangladeshi security guard.

Medics treated the security guard and brought him to the Commonwealth Health Center's emergency room for further treatment.

Tarkong said the victim sustained head trauma and contusions and abrasions on the left shoulder, which was also dislocated.

Tarkong said one suspect was described as short and fat, while

PSS on CUC suit: No funding to pay utility arrears

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
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REPORTER

Public School System officials reiterated yesterday that the system has no funds to pay the estimated \$6 million it owes the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. covering utility arrears from past fiscal years. This was in response to the latest lawsuit filed by CUC against PSS to collect on unpaid arrears.

Derek Sasamoto, PSS finance director, told *Saipan Tribune* that the system is barely surviving in its current operational needs due to the limited funds earmarked for public schools.

CUC filed last week a collection suit against PSS, the Commonwealth Health Center, and the central government for failing to pay their obligations for years amounting to over \$18 million.

Sasamoto, along with Education Commissioner Dr. Rita A. Sablan and Board of Education chair Herman T. Guerrero, disclosed that they have yet to see the formal court document as of yesterday.

"We really need to look in terms of what the lawsuit is asking. In the first place, we don't control the purse. Even if we want to [pay], the central government controls it. We need to see it and figure out what needs to be done. But as of today, we haven't been served," Guerrero told *Saipan Tribune*.

According to Sasamoto, in order to pay the utility arrears with CUC, PSS needs to be given a big chunk of money for that specific purpose.

"Any cost outside of our budget has an impact [on the operation of schools] because every year we go budget to

budget. And anything outside of it is a major obstacle to PSS," said Sasamoto. "We don't get a large infusion of cash and we're not only challenge by a limited budget but the cash flow as well," he said.

The fiscal year 2014 budget of PSS allocates \$2.3 million for utilities. However, Sasamoto said, this may not even be enough to pay the bills of schools during the entire fiscal year. PSS was appropriated \$33 million for fiscal year 2014. The bulk of this amount—\$28.6 million—is earmarked for personnel cost.

Based on the projection of PSS, it could generate \$1.8 million in potential savings this fiscal year after a law was enacted reducing the water and wastewater charges of public schools. PSS used to pay \$4 million in utilities a year but,

with the rate relief law, the projected consumption for one year is predicted to cost a little over \$2 million.

PSS earlier disclosed that this "savings" will go the im-

mediate needs of classrooms and curriculum.

Sasamoto discounted any possibility of redirecting this potential savings to pay in part the arrears with CUC.

"Even with that savings, we still have overcrowded classrooms and limited personnel," he said, adding that the federal grants PSS receives also have specific purposes.

Delta donates duvets to hospital

Patients at the Commonwealth Health Center will have a more comfortable stay after Delta Air Lines donated 200 retired Delta duvet blankets from their Business Elite Class.

Chris Concepcion, sales account executive; Daisy Sablan, station manager; Alex Palacios, ACS station supervisor; and other Delta Air Lines representatives delivered the duvets for

patients' use at the Commonwealth Health Center.

On hand to receive the duvets were interim CEO Esther Muña, Medical Affairs director Dr. Sherleen Osman, hospital administrator Jesse Tudela, CFO Cora Ada, facilities director Warren Villagomez, treasurer Delia Johnson, and other CHC staff.

Muña and Osman thanked

Delta Air Lines for their generosity. "We are very fortunate to be the recipient of these comfortable duvet blankets from Delta Air Lines and it's worth mentioning that they have been generous with us in the past. To have Delta Air Lines assist us in our effort to improve our patients' experience at CHC is huge!"

Osman said the comforters will be used by patients in the inpatient wards and recovery rooms. (CHCC)

Power outage in Garapan on Thursday

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has scheduled a power interruption on Thursday, Dec. 19, from 8:15am to 8:45am, to allow a CUC line crew to safely relocate a transformer power pole on Kalachucha Av., next to the Family Building in Garapan.

Areas that will be affected include Adetfa St., Kamia Av., Botones Av., Cactus St., Alaihai Av., Filooris Av., Tamanti-gi St., Kamia Av., Kalachucha

Av., Kulites Pl., Orchid St., Puti Tainobiu Av., Bukiki Av., Lirio St., Garapan St., Gobi-etno Dr., Adilanto Lp., Mayot Av., Siniot Ct., Punni Ct., Magalahi Dr., Chief Daon Ct., Chief Poyo Ct., Flores Rosa St., Leston St., Sugar King Rd., Executive Ct., President St., Ruler Ct., Governor Pl., Husga Av., Director Ct., CUC lift stations in the area, and the traffic light next to Happy Market.

However, Kalachucha Av. in Garapan will remain offline until 10:30am.

Water services may be affected in the area during the power interruption; however, all services should be restored after the power is re-energized.

Because of the scale of work that will be performed, travelers are urged to take alternate routes or to exercise caution when driving through the affected areas. (CUC)



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† The Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for Purchases is a variable rate of 16.24% as of 10/23/13. The intro fixed APR for balance transfers is 2.99% for the first eight billing cycles following the opening of your account for balance transfers made within the 30 days of account opening. After that, the variable rate will apply. The fixed Cash Advance APR is 18.00%. The fixed Penalty APR is 18.00% and may be applied if you make a late payment. The Minimum Interest Charge will be no less than \$1.00. The Foreign Transaction Fee is 2.5% of the U.S. dollar amount of any Purchase or Cash Advance made in a foreign currency. The ATM Cash Advance Fee is 3% of the transaction amount (\$3 min) and the Over-the-Counter Cash Advance, Balance Transfer and Convenience Check Fees are 3% of the transaction amount (\$5 min). \$0 introductory annual fee for the first year after account opening; thereafter, the annual fee is \$60. Additional limitation, terms and conditions apply. See the United MileagePlus® Credit Card Agreement for more information.

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Slight drop in number of NMC students taking remedial courses

» Over 530 enrolled in the program this fall 2013

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The number of students taking remedial classes at the Northern Marianas College slightly

declined this semester, based on data obtained from the college. Records show that in fall 2010, there were 650 students enrolled in various remedial

courses at NMC, representing 53 percent of the entire student population. At the time, the college had a total of 1,230 enrollees. In fall 2011, the college saw

a 1-percent decline, with 586 students taking part in remedial programs, equivalent to 52 percent of the 1,124 enrollees that semester. In fall 2012, NMC saw a further decline in the volume of students taking up remedial

classes. Of the 1,207 enrollees, only 586 were in remedial classes or about 49 percent of the student population. This fall 2013, only 47 percent of NMC's student population is enrolled in remedial programs. There are 1,137 enrollees this semester, of which 530 are taking remedial classes.

According to NMC, these figures indicate that the volume of students in one or more remedial courses has been steadily declining in the past few years.

Remedial education refers to classes taken by students that are below college-level or non-degree units. Students pay tuition and can use financial aid for remedial courses, but they do not receive college credit.

According to NMC's Admissions Office, the percentage of NMC students who are enrolled in remedial courses is similar to what other studies have found when looking at other community colleges across the nation.

It says that a report prepared by the National Conference of State Legislatures indicate that several studies have found remediation rates surpassing 50 percent when it comes to community colleges.

Citing another source, the Community College Research Center at Columbia University's Teachers College, NMC said that about 60 percent of community college students enroll in at least one developmental education course.

To assist students with their

coursework, NMC said it continues to provide student service programs like tutoring, academic counseling, and early intervention activities.

The college also has an English Lab, which has materials, computer software, and additional tutors to help students who need assistance with grammar, vocabulary, and composition.

NMC is also exploring new programs that would allow high school students who have met math requirements at the secondary level to begin taking college math courses while they are still in high school. This will expose student to college-level math courses earlier and allow them additional time to prepare if necessary.

"We'll be meeting with representatives from the Public School System to see how else we can help students," said NMC dean of Academic Programs and Services Bobbi Merfalen. "We already partner with PSS on many other initiatives so this would be a natural extension of that collaboration."

According to Merfalen, NMC continues to utilize the Accuplacer assessment tool when determining placement for English courses, and the COMPASS assessment tool when determining placement for math. Both are facilitated at the NMC Testing Center on campus. Accuplacer is computer-based, and designed to test listening, reading, and grammar skills.



COOKING DEMO
Norisa Camacho's Kagman High School Culinary Arts Class conducted a Kikkoman Soy Sauce and Ace of Diamonds Tuna cooking demonstration and food sampling event at Joeten Susupe Market on Saturday, December 14.

PASKONG PINOY 2013

Suarez tops adult singing competition

Veronica Suarez topped the adult singing competition of the Paskong Pinoy 2013 held late Saturday night at the Garapan Central Park. Suarez scored 89 percent from the judges to beat runner-up Estrella Aguon and third placer Joseph Fernandez for the singing championship.

Aguon and Fernandez scored 82 percent and 74 percent, respectively. The United Filipino Organization gave the \$100 top prize to Suarez whose rendition of *Faithfully* wowed the audience. Aguon's version of *Inseparable* netted her the \$75 runner-up purse, while Fernan-

dez's *Pasko na Sinta Ko* earned him \$50. Judges for the adult singing competition were Lei Hicaro of Docomo Pacific, Magic 100.3FM DJ Rovic Caberos, and Rolly Capayas of the High Pitch Band. In the earlier singing contest for kids, 7-year-old Lawrence Tubera received the \$100 first place prize after besting two other contestants. Leonard Manuel Alla, 12, got \$75 cash as second placer, while Donato Santiago Jr., 8, got \$50 for third place.

UFO president Annamae Adaza was happy with the turnout for the Paskong Pinoy 2013. "We are really glad that we held the event at the Garapan Central Park. Even though it rained, the show had no interruptions and it was the first time that the *man'amko* watched our event. They we're there since 4pm and they said they will go after their performance but they ended up staying until 9pm. It only shows that they enjoyed the show and waited for some raffle drawings."

Adaza also thanked UFO officials, volunteers, and the Paskong Pinoy 2013 organizing committee for the success of the event. "We are all happy that we are able to go on with the event with very limited time for preparations. As always it's a group effort and to all UFO

officers, members, volunteers, our event chairwoman Nel Atalig, our program coordinator Minda Castro, DJ RV, all performers, vendors, donors, and sponsors—without all of them the event will not be possible."

Adaza also thanked major sponsor Docomo Pacific as well as LBC Mabuhay and the Tan Siu Lin Foundation for continuing to support the event.

Other donors are the Philippine Consulate General in Guam, Han Nam Supermarket, Geoffrey Melchor, Connie's Diner, Eli Arago, Natasha Service Center, New Paradise Florist, Tropics Vacation & Travel, Traders Insurance, Tropics Realty, June and Ladyvir Canape, PHI Pharmacy, Kautz Glass, Gemma Batusin, Herman's Bakery, Joharas Boutique, National Office Supply, Coca-Cola Company, Jolog's BBQ, J.E.T Holdings Company, Psalms 670 Company, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Fiesta Resort & Spa, Greenlife, Laolao Bay Golf & Resort, Super Frosty, McDonald's Saipan, Maranatha, Islander Rent a Car, Joeten Enterprises, Saipan World Resort, Pacific Islands Club, Liza Taylor, Cheap Charlie Enterprises, AON Insurance, Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino, Taro Sue Store, Genpro International Inc., Island Florals & Gifts, D&Q, Aqua Resort Club, 3Hi-Res Design, KWAU 100.3 FM, *Saipan Tribune*, and *Marianas Variety*. **(Mark Rabago)**

Ex-CPA firefighter gets 90-day prison term for another crime

Giovanni C. Sablan, a former Commonwealth Ports Authority firefighter who has prior criminal convictions, was slapped with a 90-day prison term for committing another criminal offense against his former girlfriend.

Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph N. Camacho sentenced the 25-year-old Sablan last week to six months in prison, all suspended except for 90 days, for disturbing the peace.

Camacho said the first 90 days shall be served without the possibility of parole or early release. Sablan was given credit for time served.

The judge said the remainder of the sentence shall be imposed in part or in whole for any probation violations.

Upon release from custody, Sablan will be placed on supervised probation for one year. He was required to complete anger management counseling and barred from drinking alcoholic beverages.

He was also ordered to pay a \$500 fine, \$100 restitution to the victim, and perform 100 hours of community service.

The Office of the Attorney General charged Sablan in June

with interfering with a domestic violence report, disturbing the peace, and criminal contempt.

Sablan and counsel, assistant public defender Benjamin Petersburg, signed a plea deal with the government. Sablan pleaded guilty to disturbing the peace. The remaining charges were dropped as part of the deal.

According to court papers, Sablan disturbed the peace of the victim on April 23, 2013, on Saipan by punching a car's dashboard and yelling at her.

The judge said the victim was never physically hurt.

As a special note, Camacho said, the victim asked that the most important condition is for Sablan to get anger management counseling.

Sablan is a mixed martial arts fighter. In October 2011, then Superior Court Associate Judge Perry B. Inos slapped him with a 58-day prison term for assaulting his former girlfriend in the parking lot of a hotel in Chalan Kanoa.

In December 2011, while still on probation, the defendant was arrested for allegedly turning violent, pushing his brother and challenging him to a fight. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Request for Proposals

RFP-14-GOV-043

GROUP LIFE INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES AND RETIREES

Governor Eloy S. Inos and Lt. Governor Jude S. Hofschneider are soliciting proposals in compliance with NMIAC § 70-30.3-210 (Competitive Sealed Proposals) for the provision of sealed proposals from qualified insurance companies and firms to provide group life insurance coverage in accordance with the scope of benefits identified in the Request for Proposals. The Request for Proposals will be available after December 5, 2013 from the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund, Capitol Hill Saipan, MP 96950 (670) 664-8080.

Proposals will be evaluated based on four criteria: (1) experience of firm in the provision of group life insurance (25%); (2) financial capacity of firm and its reinsurance partners (25%); (3) proposed coverage (25%); and (4) costs (25%). The Commonwealth is seeking a firm with significant experience in the provision of group life insurance coverage with financial background to provide adequate assurances of coverage capacity and low cost for the requested benefits. These three evaluation factors are summarized in the table below.

Evaluation Factor	
Experience	25%
Financial Capacity	25%
Proposed coverage	25%
Costs	25%

Proposals must be submitted by December 30, 2013 at 4:00 p.m. to:

Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund
P.O. Box 501247 CK
Saipan, MP 96950-1247

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and to waive any nonmaterial imperfections in a proposal if doing so is in the best interest of the Fund. All proposals shall become the property of the NMI Retirement Fund.

CPA board member pushes aggressive collection of arrears

By **MONETH G. DEPOSA**
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Citing the lessons it learned from its experience with Freedom Air, a Commonwealth Ports Authority board member wants a more aggressive effort in collecting the agency's receivables.

Benigno Sablan, who chairs the seaports facilities committee, disclosed Friday that at least eight companies doing business

in CNMI seaports alone are behind in their obligations and must be dealt with seriously.

He cited the outstanding payables of Fas Moving & Storage, which has \$30,000 in arrears. The company, he said, has not been paying CPA since April 2011.

Sablan pointed out that in the event the company decides to file for bankruptcy, CPA may again potentially lose a substantial amount, similar to its experience with Freedom Air which owes CPA \$1.2 million. With Freedom Air filing for bankruptcy, CPA has yet to collect from the company as everything is in status quo pursuant to the court filing.

"We learned our lesson from Freedom Air and we need to be vigilant. We need to communicate with our clients about their arrears such as Fas Moving because we will lose \$30,000 if it decides to file for bankruptcy," Sablan told

fellow board members during Friday's meeting at the seaport.

Another company, Ginen Saipan, is said to be three months behind in its payments, while Saipan Cell & Paging is reportedly behind by five months. Sablan said that GPPC Inc. is also behind by three months.

Another company with unpaid obligations to CPA is Seabridge Inc., which is behind by three months, as well as Marianas Industrial Services

Inc., which has not been paying since 2008 and has already closed shop without fulfilling its obligations to CPA. Sablan disclosed that this particular account has been referred to the legal department for proceedings, along with the account of Fas Moving & Storage.

Saipan Crewboats was also found owing CPA over \$11,000 and has not been paying since August 2000.

Sablan said the ports author-

ity will see a substantial loss if CPA fails to actively pursue these account receivables.

On Tinian, out of four seaport tenants, only one is behind in its payment, the Hungshun Corp., he said.

On Rota, Sablan reported that all three tenants are current in their payments and these included Nicolas A. Songsong, IOTA, and Rota Terminal and Transfer.

He pointed out that CPA has always the option to revoke or terminate a lease agreement if companies are deemed not meeting their obligations to CPA.

Commonwealth Codes now on LRC website

The Commonwealth Law Revision Commission announced yesterday the launch of the Commonwealth Code and the Commonwealth Administrative Code on its website at www.cnmilaw.org. Both Codes are available free of charge and fully searchable.

The launch of these products marks a milestone in the legal development of the Commonwealth as for the first time in its history its laws are freely available to all persons anywhere in the world.

The online release of these products was only possible with the strong support of the Commission members: Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro, Sen. Ray N. Yumul, Rep. Christopher D. Leon Guerrero, Attorney General Joey P. San Nicolas, and Bar Association representative

Bruce L. Mailman.

Castro said: "I am elated to have these resources available online so that the Commonwealth joins the world in making its laws freely available on the Internet. I thank the hard

ON THE NET
www.cnmilaw.org

work of the Law Revision Commission staff: Michael A. Stanker, executive director; Michael T. Witry, staff attorney; Albert A. Hicking, website and office manager; and Relihna I. Iakopus, publications clerk."

The LRC staff will conduct training sessions on how to use these resources on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota after the holidays for all interested government, private, and educational entities. If you would like to reserve a training session, contact the Law Revision Commission at 236-9820 or at cnmilaw@justice.gov.mp. (**LRC**)

\$3 toll fee in Marpi proposed

By **HAIDEE V. EUGENIO**
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Rep. Roman C. Benavente (Ind-Saipan) is proposing a \$3 toll fee on "each nonresident passenger" who enters the Marpi area to help fund the maintenance of historic sites within Saipan.

In his pre-filed House Local Bill 18-40 or the Marpi Area Toll Fee Act of 2013, Benavente said that imposing a \$3 toll fee is a "reasonable and worthwhile means" to generate funds for the construction and maintenance of Saipan's tourist sites.

Under Benavente's proposal co-sponsored by Rep. Lorenzo Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), the Division of Parks and Recreation under the Department of Lands and Natural Resources shall erect toll gates enter-

ing the Marpi area and collect the toll fee.

The \$3 toll fee is to be imposed on "all nonresident visitors of the area, not to include nonresident employees of farm owners in the area from 6am to 6pm daily."

The Division of Parks and Recreation will be required to submit a report on all toll fees collected at the end of each month to the Finance secretary.

The Finance secretary, in turn, shall make a financial report of the status of the Marpi Area Toll Fee Fund or Account to the Saipan and Northern Islands Legislative Delegation no later than 30 days after the close of each fiscal year.

HLB 18-40 says funds collected shall be available for the SNILD's appropriation, provided that 50 percent of these

funds shall be for the construction and maintenance of tourist sites within Saipan and to assist in the operations of DLNR's Division of Parks and Recreation.

This local bill is entirely separate from House Bill 18-96 that Benavente and Deleon Guerrero also introduced in July charging a \$3 fee for visiting the popular tourist spot Grotto in Marpi for

sightseeing or diving. This fee is supposed to secure a source of funding for the Grotto's maintenance and security.

Grotto is an underwater limestone cavern plummeting 70 feet at its deepest point. Tourists and residents flock to the Grotto for a chance to view the limestone cavern or a chance to dive its underwater world.

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB14-DCCA/AGING-025

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: DECEMBER 30, 2013
TIME: 10:00 A.M.

**"CONGREGATE MEAL AND HOME MEAL DELIVERY FOR THE DEPARTMENT
OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS – OFFICE ON AGING"**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE COMMONWEALTH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY AND ALL BIDS AND PROPOSALS; IN WHOLE OR IN PART, AND TO WAVE ANY IMPERFECTION IN A BID IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS. ALL BIDS SHALL BECOME THE PROPERTY OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ LAURA T. OGUMORO
SECRETARY OF DC&CA

/S/ HERMAN S. SABLAN
DIRECTOR, P&S

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-14-003

**Completion of Installation of a New 500,000 Gal. Diesel Fuel Tank
at Power Plant No.1, Saipan**

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed proposals (Request for Proposals – RFP) from qualified and experienced Tank erection / installation firms for correction of existing defects, assembly, installation and commissioning a new Above Ground Oil Storage Tank (AST), as per the specifications contained in the proposal document and monitored through a construction management firm and a third party quality control firm, contracted by CUC. The Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) and the United States District Court entered into a Stipulated Order Number Two (SO No. 2) for Preliminary Injunctive Relief under Civil Case No. CV 08-0051 (Section 1.1). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) filed the civil action seeking injunctive relief under the Clean Water Act (CWA), and the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). This work shall satisfy the requirement in Section IV, Oil Spill Prevention and Preparedness, Paragraphs # 28 Tank System Integrity Testing Workplan and Implementation for CUC Power plants 1 and 2 and Integrity Inspection Program.

The Saipan Power plant is located in the Lower Base Industrial Area near the Saipan Seaport, in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The foundation, tank and accessories have been designed by a US based company and the tank assembly kit was supplied to Saipan port by the same company, United Industries Group, CA (UIG) for installation by a local contractor. The previous construction contractor has been terminated due to default and performance issues while the metal work and welding work was in progress. The project is currently in a partially finished state.

The purpose of this RFP is to ensure the CUC is to ensure that the new tank is built to the codes and standards to which it was originally designed, including the corrections necessary, details of which have been described in the RFP and meets the stringent tests and inspections noted therein. Upon being awarded the contract and receiving the Notice to Proceed (NTP), the contractor will complete the correction as provided in the RFP. Following schedules shall be noted by all vendors:

- Contract Award - February 6, 2014
- Notice to proceed / site mobilization - February 13, 2014
- Tank completion - July 8, 2014

The Scope-of-Work and Proposal package will be emailed, upon request, to all interested proposers, by the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, during working days, from 7:30 AM to 4:00 PM local time, until December 18, 2013.

A mandatory Pre-Proposal Conference followed by a site visit is scheduled at the Saipan CUC Power Plant 1, administration building on December 18, 2013 at 10:00 AM, to ensure that the contractors are fully aware of the work involved and familiarize with the site conditions. All proposers are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the proposers due to lack of information or understanding of the plant site conditions in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or performance of work under the contract.

One (1) Original and Six(6) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-14-003 - REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL - Completion of Installation of a New 500,000 Gal. Diesel Fuel Tank at Power Plant No.1, Saipan" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, no later than December 31, 2013 at 10:00 AM (ChST). Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Upon award of the contract the Offeror is required to submit a copy of his CNMI Business license in compliance with the Contractor's Registration and Licensing Laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The Contractor and all subcontractors will be obligated to pay wage rates not less than the current CNMI minimum wage, prevailing through the period of contract, as indicated in the web page – <http://www.dol.gov/esa/minwage/cnmi/cnmi.htm>. The contractor shall be required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws.

A Proposal Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total proposal price must accompany the proposal. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total proposal price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful proposer. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Proposers are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code, with the proposal.

All inquiries must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00am (ChST) on December 20, 2013, to Mr. Manny B. Sablan, Jr., Purchasing Officer via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org and Petroleum and Compliance Manager, Mr. Andrew Longworth at andrew.longworth@cucgov.org.

Selection procedure shall be in full compliance with CUC Procurement Regulations. CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals and waive any imperfection in the proposal in the interest of the government.

CHARLES WARREN
Acting Executive Director

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

INVITATION FOR BIDS
CUC-IFB-14-006

**CHALAN KIYA-KANAT TABLA WATERLINE CONNECTION
(W12-022)**

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the Construction of Chalan Kiya-Kanat Tabla Waterline Connection in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The scope-of-work consists of installation of new six (6) inch ductile iron distribution main connecting the Kanat Tabla booster pump through the existing Chalan Kiya water distribution main line. It also includes replacement and installation of various new valves, and water service lateral connections at designated areas within the Chalan Kiya Village.

This project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of the approval for project award from USEPA.

CUC requires the Project to be completed in **240 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The Bid Tender Documents may be picked-up, upon receipt of a non-refundable payment from the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check, or credit card in the amount of \$100.00 (non-refundable); at the CUC, Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Dandan, Saipan, between 7:30 AM to 11:30 AM and 12:30 PM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by a Site Visit is scheduled on December 24, 2013 at 10:00 AM (ChST) at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No. 15, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) original and Five (5) copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-14-006, Chalan Kiya-Kanat Tabla Waterline Connection, Saipan" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 14, 2014**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission.

All bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A Payment Bond of one hundred (100%) percent and a Performance Bond of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification should be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

All questions or request for clarification regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on December 27, 2013 to Manny B. Sablan, Jr., Manager, CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christi Lazaro, Engineer, CUC Water-Wastewater Division via email christi.lazaro@cucgov.org and Ms. Marcela Tenorio, Administrative Support Assistant, CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email marcela.tenorio@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

ALAN W. FLETCHER
Executive Director

Names of Executive of the Year nominees out

BARRIGADA, Guam—George Chiu, executive vice president of Tan Holdings, has been named one of the 10 nominees for the 2013 *Guam Business Magazine* Executive of the Year.

In a statement yesterday, *Guam Business Magazine's* other nominees are: Wayne L. Cornell, president and CEO, DZSP 21 LLC; Vincent D. Cruz, general manager, Sheraton Laguna Guam Resort; Ronald G. Gonzales, vice president, Lyon; John A. Limtiaco, president, Pacific Unlimited Inc.; N. Oscar Miyashita, senior adviser, Ernst & Young LLP; Kaleo S. Moylan; director, Moylan's Insurance Underwriters; Mary A.Y. Okada, president and CEO, Guam Community College; Torgun E. Smith, executive vice president, Morrico Equipment LLC and John W. Wade, CEO, American Territories, ANZ Guam Inc.

The annual *Guam Business Magazine* Executive of the

Year award recognizes executives who have made outstanding contributions to the local business community and raised the bar in the field in which they are involved.

Guam Business Magazine will honor the 2013 nominees for the *Guam Business Magazine* Executive of the Year award at the 31st Annual Gala on Jan. 18, 2014, at the Hyatt Regency Guam in conjunction with the release of the *Guam Business Magazine* January-February issue, featuring a commissioned portrait of the winner on its cover. The name of the winner has traditionally been held secret by the magazine until the unveiling of the issue on the night of the gala. Proceeds from the gala will benefit the Guam Chapter of the American Red Cross.

Tickets, at \$150 per person, for the Jan. 18 award gala may be purchased from Chita A. Blaise, CEO of the American Red Cross, by calling 472-6217

or by emailing chita.blaise@redcross.org.

Past recipients include Robert H. Jones of Triple J Enterprises (1983); John M. Borlas of IT&E Overseas Inc. (1984); Philip J. Flores of BankPacific (1985); Doris Flores Brooks of the Office of Public Accountability (1986); Mark V. Pangilinan of M.V. Pangilinan Enterprises Inc. (1987); Allen A. Pickens of Tax-Aide (1988); the late T. Roy Sullivan of Jones & Guerrero Co. (1989); Kurt S. Moylan of Moylan's Insurance (1990); Akira "Mike" Baba of Baba Corp. (1991); Paul M. Calvo of Calvo Enterprises Inc. (1992); Antoinette D. Sanford of the Sanford Technology Group (1993); the late Kenneth T. Jones of Jones & Guerrero Co. (1994); the late Edward M. Calvo of Calvo Enterprises Inc. (1995); L. Carl Peterson of Money Resources Inc. (1996); William R. Thompson (1997); the late John K. Lee of First

Hawaiian Bank (1998); the late Henry L. Schnabel of Calvo's Insurance Underwriters (1999); Marian Aldan-Pierce of DFS Saipan (2000); Manfred H. Pieper of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia (2001); Thomas G. Ahillen of Asia Pacific Solutions LLC (2002); Juan T. Guerrero of Herman's Modern Bakery Inc. (2003); Joey Crisostomo of Cars Plus LLC (2004); Joseph "Jerry" Kramer of Pacific International Inc. (2004); David M. Sablan of the Century Group of Companies (2005); Alfred C. Ysrael of Tanota Partners (2006); Lee P. Webber of MDA Guam (2007); Laura Lynn V. Dacanay of First Hawaiian Bank (2008); Jerry Cho Yee Tan of Tan Holdings (2009); Lourdes A. Leon Guerrero of Bank of Guam (2010); Jay R. Shedd of Docomo Pacific (2011) and Jerrold C. Johnson of Hawaiian Rock Products (2012). (PR)

NMC spring 2014 admission application deadline on Friday

Those interested in enrolling for the Northern Marianas College's spring 2014 semester will need to submit their application for admission no later than Friday, Dec. 20, 2013.

Applications for admission and other forms may be picked up at NMC's Office of Admissions & Records located in Building N at the NMC As Terlaje campus, or may be downloaded from www.marianas.edu on the spring 2014 Registration Information page.

Supporting documents (i.e., transcripts from institutions previously attended, health evaluation form, and copy of a valid photo I.D.) must be turned in within 60 calendar days of submitting the admission application. Application forms submitted after Dec. 20 will be processed for the following semester.

New students and returning

students (those who did not take courses at NMC during the fall 2013 semester) are required to attend a student orientation in order to register for courses. Students must confirm which orientation they will be attending by contacting the Queanna Sablan at the Office of Student Leadership and Activities at 237-6790. Note the important dates below:

NMC offers several degree programs, including a bachelor of science degree in education (emphasis on elementary education, early childhood education, special education, or rehabilitation and human services), associate degrees in business, business administration (emphasis on accounting, business management, or computer applications), liberal

arts, nursing, natural resources management, criminal justice, and hospitality management. Moreover, it offers short-term certificate programs in different vocational, academic, and professional areas.

For additional information or inquiries, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 237-6768/6771 or visit www.marianas.edu. (NMC)

IMPORTANT DATES

- Dec. 20, 2013: NMC spring 2014 admission application deadline
- Jan. 2, 2014: Student orientation for new and returning students (3pm-5:30pm, Room D-1)
- Jan. 8: Student orientation for new and returning students (6pm-8:30pm, Room D-1)
- Jan. 9: Student orientation for new and returning students

- (9am-11:30am, Room D-1)
- Jan. 10: Early registration for spring 2014 graduation candidates and students under Disability Support Services (9am-4pm)
- Jan. 13: Registration for students with PowerCampus ID #s 000000138 through 000014370 (9am-4pm)
- Jan. 14: Registration for students with PowerCampus

- ID #s 000014371 through 000017530 (9am-4pm)
- Jan. 15: Registration for students with PowerCampus ID #s 000017531 through 000019617 (9am-4pm)
- Jan. 16: Registration for students with PowerCampus ID #s 000019617 or Higher (9am-4pm)
- Jan. 17: Late registration (9am-4pm)

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

December 18, 2005

PSS autonomy assured

The incoming administration of Gov.-elect Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov.-elect Timothy P. Villagomez has made it clear that it would respect the autonomy of the Public School System as well as support its various projects. Transition Committee sub-chairs Daniel Nielsen and Frank Rabauliman attended the special board meeting of the Board of Education Friday morning and assured its members that the PSS would have the full support of the incoming administration. Nielsen said they presented to the board the outline of the next administration's position in education matters. "The governor-elect will listen to them [PSS]," he said, adding that the new administration would allow the board to continue its implementation of education projects.

NMI Fund not getting payments from agencies

The NMI Retirement Fund expressed concerns over a potential lack of money to give for the last pension payment this year, saying that no government office has remitted any contribution yet for this month. Fund administrator Karl T. Reyes said yesterday that not a single government department or agency has paid its employer contribution, which the Fund uses to pay the pension obligation to retirees. He said that Northern Marianas College and Commonwealth Utilities Corp., the only two agencies which comply with the new employer contribution rate of 36.7 percent have not sent their payment.

December 18, 2006

'End reliance on public sector'

U.S. insular areas, including the Commonwealth, must take the initiative if they are to end public sector dominance of their economies, according to the federal government. The U.S. Department of the Interior said that it can only provide leadership in developing private sector economies in the CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. R. Thomas Weimer, the U.S. Department of the Interior's assistant secretary for policy, management and budget, issued this statement in response to a report by the U.S. Government Accountability Office on the economic and financial accountability problems in the U.S. insular areas.

JTB: 54K Japanese tourists to visit Marianas at yearend

Some 54,000 Japanese tourists will visit the Marianas this year-end, according to a survey by a top travel management group in Japan. JTB Corp. projects that the Guam and Saipan will receive 1,000 more travelers from Japan from Dec. 23, 2006 to Jan. 3, 2007, compared with the same period last year. The travel company did not provide separate figures for each destination. The estimated arrivals for Guam and Saipan represents 8.3 percent of the 648,000 Japanese expected to take trips out of their country during yearend.

December 18, 2007

3rd armed robbery in 5 days

Three men staged an armed robbery at a store in As Lito Saturday night. It was the third robbery to happen on Saipan in just five days. The suspects fled aboard a car after getting an undetermined amount of money from Kang-Da Market, the Department of Public Safety said yesterday. DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said police received the report about an armed robbery in As Lito Saturday at 6:02pm. Ogumoro said preliminary investigation showed that two suspects entered Kang-Da Market and one who was armed with a possible Taser gun demanded money.

China Eastern to resume Shanghai-Saipan flights

China Eastern will resume its twice weekly Shanghai-Saipan flights starting Jan. 11, 2006, close to five months after the charter flights were suspended because of the decline of tourists coming in from China. Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino chairman Michael Kwan said he is pleased about the resumption of the Shanghai-Saipan flights and the development would mean an additional 27,000 tourist arrivals annually to the CNMI. He added that he conservatively estimates that the estimated 27,000 additional tourists from the Middle Kingdom will spend over \$27 million during their stay in the Commonwealth and that means an additional \$27 million infused into the local economy. China Eastern will use A300 airplane with a seating capacity of 262 seats for their resumed Shanghai-Saipan flights.



AT THE SENATE

Sen. Jovita Taimanao (Ind-Rota) poses with her staffers at the Senate building last week, after presiding over a public hearing of the Committee on Executive Appointments and Government Investigations.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Service members volunteer at Tinian school, community center



Marines and sailors repaint the Tinian Community Center Dec. 13 to improve existing relationships with the locals during Exercise Forager Fury II.

LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO



Lance Cpl. Michael Mayberry repaints the Tinian Community Center Dec. 13.

LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO



Lance Cpl. Michael Mayberry gives high-fives to students Dec. 13 at Tinian Christian Academy. The service members visited the school in effort to improve existing relationships with the local community during Exercise Forager Fury II.

LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO



Lance Cpl. Ramiaque Tota pushes a student on a swing Dec. 13 at Tinian Christian Academy.

LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO

By **LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO**
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI

TINIAN, Northern Mariana Islands—Marines and sailors participated in a community relation event on Tinian on Dec. 13 at the Tinian Christian Academy and the Tinian Community Center to improve existing relationships with the local community.

The service members are participating in Exercise Forager Fury II, and took time from their daily routine to read to the children at TCA and repaint the community center.

Forager Fury II is a joint exercise and the purpose is to employ and assess combat power generation in a deployed and austere environment.

"One of objectives of Forager Fury II is to enhance local relationships on Tinian," said Navy Lt. Alexander J. Cho, chaplain with Marine Wing Support Squadron 171, Marine Aircraft Group 12, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

"People can see what we're doing with the reconstruction of North Field and the aircraft in the sky, but volunteering at the school



Lance Cpl. Eric Greenlee, left, plays with students Dec. 13 at Tinian Christian Academy.

LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO

hits home. For the students, it's almost the best day of the whole school year and an event like this impacts the entire family."

The presence of the service

members who volunteered their time to make a difference within the community is greatly appreciated, according to Jim Howard, senior pastor

and principal of TCA.

"This was a really positive experience for the students," said Howard. "This was not just a military group coming in and do-

ing operations, but coming in and taking some time to give back to the community and it means so much for the students."

The volunteer group consist-

ed of Marines and sailors with various military occupational specialties within MWSS-171 and Marine Air Support Squadron 2, Marine Air Control Group 18, all currently assigned to MAG-12 for the exercise.

The service members read stories and interacted with students. Afterward, they began repainting the community center with the intent to leave a clear message to the island of Tinian, according to Lance Cpl. Ramiaque Tota, air support net operator with MASS-2.

"Marines do have a caring heart," said Tota. "This is just a start. Other than helping students, we can do more in the community, even more than painting the community center."

While the purpose of Forager Fury II is to train and maintain operational readiness, the Marines are also committed to building local relationships and respecting the local community.

"The students see troops on shows and movies, but for them to play and laugh and actually interact with their heroes has a huge impact, an impact that a principal or teacher cannot make," said Howard.

Opinion

Hafa Adail

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

A new Cold War tug-of-war on Ukraine



To its credit, the Obama administration has condemned the crackdown on demonstrators in Ukraine and is suggesting that further repression might lead to economic sanctions. There are signs that international support for the protesters, who are calling for a closer relationship with Western Europe, may induce President Viktor Yanukovich to recommit to an association agreement with the European Union that he backed away from under pressure from Russia. Promising efforts also are underway to provide Ukraine with financial aid to enable it to close a deal with the EU.

At the same time, U.S. officials are rightly emphasizing that Ukraine can honor its people's European aspirations without rejecting a harmonious relationship with Russia. Victoria Nuland, the U.S. assistant secretary of State for European and Eurasian affairs, who visited Ukraine this week, repeatedly has said that the future of Ukraine is not a "zero-sum game."

Contrast that approach with the view of former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton, who wrote in a Times Op-Ed article this week that the crisis in Ukraine demonstrated that the West should have brought that country into its "orbit," including by offering it membership in NATO, a military alliance still seen by Russia as directed against it. Such arguments play into President Vladimir Putin's fears about an encirclement of Russia by its erstwhile enemies and, at the same time, encourage the notion that Russia itself is not part of Europe.

Putin is an authoritarian and a bully, and he clearly is unreconciled to the loss of Russian influence—in Eastern Europe and elsewhere—that accompanied the collapse of the Soviet Union. But it isn't surprising that he would regard Ukraine, a country of 46 million with linguistic and religious connections to Russia, as a special case. Even after independence, many Ukrainians, particularly those in the eastern part of the country, identify with Russia.

That doesn't justify Russian interference in Ukraine's internal affairs or attempts to muscle it into joining a Russian-dominated trading bloc instead of associating with the EU. But it does call for the sort of sophisticated response U.S. and European officials have shown in recent days, one that supports Ukraine's sovereignty, democratization and self-determination but doesn't ask that country to take sides in a new Cold War.

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Gravitas in 'Gravity'

Perusing the Saipan multiplex schedule shows that the movie *Gravity* was able to swing by the lagoon last month. It is a blockbuster of a movie that has broken box office records, premiering with favorable reviews at the Venice International Film Festival.

I was in Honolulu to visit mother at a hospital during its U.S. release on Oct. 4 and given the gravity of my island presence as well as my tight schedule, I decided on a "break" to watch the movie, or attend an INHS60 High School reunion happily scheduled at the same time. As written about earlier, I chose my high school mates, some of whom I had not seen for more than 50 years!

On the Saturday of the last Thanks-Hanukkah weekend, I joined a birthday celebration sensible enough not to end with a post-dinner drink and karaoke singing at a pub but with a viewing of the George Clooney-Sandra Bullock riveting 3D space fiction drama, *Gravity*. From the first clip of the stunning outer space opening scene, I was airborne and existentially floated for 90 minutes, getting off the padded cinema chairs with unsteady knees like the Bullock character at the end before the film credits appeared. Stratosphere stuck for 90 minutes, I was finally earthbound and grounded.

I did not study Latin in school so my hanging *gravitas* onto this article's title is not to feign an erudition I do not have (though I remember it to be one of four Roman virtues) but to underscore the seriousness that the word conjures when dealing with a well-written, incredibly directed, and superbly-acted film! In short, the film has balls! To the squeamish, I mean that in a deeply religious sense.

We are now into Christmas that starts the Roman liturgical year of a messianic story. The survival of the story of a manger child's journey from birth to the ignominy of Golgotha and the glory of an empty tomb has got to be one of the most resilient human stories in the repertoire of foretelling our species' survival. Used by the British Empire through the metaphors of the King James holy writ, we got B.C. to refer to "before Christ" to tell time as Rome earlier decreed the planet's 365.25 days solar revolution as Anno Domini, "the year of our Lord."

But first, a disclaimer: the movie *Gravity* is nowhere close to being a religious film, though some zealous clerics have been quick to make it appear as such, pitting religious symbolism versus technology, with the film allegedly proving the reality of God as raw reality dismantling human technology. My religiosity rises only slightly above the punch lines delivered by irreverent late night show hosts in their monologues so I will avoid the theological discourse.

My reference earlier to my religious sense of having balls (female colleagues will pardon the machismo of the chosen metaphor) has to do with the story of the Christ as chronicled by those who took the paradigmatic story Jesus of Nazareth and spun it into the cosmic realm in the medium of its time, the books, later to be called the

By JAIME VERGARA
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Jaime R. Vergara is an ordained minister of the United Methodist Church and was pastor of Saipan Immanuel UMC at the second millenium's turn. He now writes from China.



Biblos or the Bible.

Joseph Wesley Matthews of our acquaintance once said, quoted in John P. Cock's daily reflection/blog: "In literary flesh and blood, the gospel hero is...cosmic and historical. ...[H]e walks freely out across the anxious, uncertain, ambiguous waters of life. At the same time, he beckons others to do likewise. ...With utter intentionality, the hero lives as the free person. ...He is liberated to be thankful for life; to love this world of neighbors; to be directed toward the future. ...And while he is busy living, he simultaneously declares to those about...that they too can live in [such] freedom.... (printed in *Bending History: Talks of Joseph W. Mathews, Vol. I, 'The Christ of History'*, John Epps, editor).

The movie *Gravity* tells of the story of a seasoned astronaut (Clooney) bantering with a neophyte medical engineer (Bullock) on a spacewalk on a Shuttle Explorer mission to repair the Hubble Telescope when the mission needed to abort; floating debris careened at disastrous speed, a catastrophic consequence of an attempt to disable a satellite. The astronaut ended up releasing himself from tether when holding on meant burdening the timid and guilt-ridden engineer's prospects of survival. Through his influence (Christ-like in my metaphor), the despairing engineer is liberated from her fears and suicidal bent, challenged to overcome her perceived inadequacies, and she got herself moving to elect life.

I was surprised at the crowd in the audience, recognizing even two of my students, until the film (*Di xin yin li*) moved from the shuttle to the International Space Station where a Soyuz module failed to get the heroine to the Tiangong (China's spacelab). It just so happens that part of one of our class lyrics to the tune of *Brahms' Lullaby*, goes:

*In the Tiangong, you are all alone.
Back in Zhongguo is your home.
Voom, Voom, Cosmonaut,
are you having fun,
with the moon and the stars
and the very large sun?*

Though a variation of the song has been in our songbook for 40 years, I felt walking out of the theatre serendipitously contemporaneous to the film. I was ready, with the heroine's awakened wiles to get on the capsule and head "home."

Once I was puny, but now I can freely be.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

NMI's lack of definition

Historically, the CNMI has chased the elusive dollar beginning with Marianas reintegration in the late '50s. We did it with the cargo cult mindset that the green bag is part of the Annual Christmas Drop hailing from Andersen Air Force Base in Guam. There's a drop but it wasn't the green bag.

We continued chasing the elusive dollar in what's now known as the Covenant Agreement. But it was excluded lest the new government would go broke instantly. Our annual budget then was about \$9 million in the incipient years of our constitutional government. So there's nothing up that alley either.

We moved on approving casino gambling even against the will of the people on Saipan who shot it down twice in a plebiscite. It's a pipedream we feel good about as misery and hopelessness deepens. No wonder the persistent disorientation and the unlikelihood of economic triumph up ahead. There emerges the instant soba mindset dangerous at any and every speed.

The latest fad is ethnic hegemony, ignoring that the CNMI is a permanent part of the U.S. It comes with the mixed messages of ethnic dilution via the casino industry. Is the CNMI sovereign, hence the push for ethnic hegemony? Which is which: a nonexistent sovereignty, hegemony, or cultural dilution?

The apparent misgivings are a tale that most folks aren't necessarily conversant of pertinent Covenant provisions. Thus emerges the misguided agenda of proponents spouting nonexistent NMI sovereignty. Appalling the pregnancy of willful disconnection and disorientation.

The spins that dissenters posit as statement of facts—on various Covenant provisions—are basically ludicrous assertions that the sun now rises in the west. That you refuse to stick within the realistic context of the agreement doesn't magically make it true. It still is an agenda that refuses to employ intellectual integrity. So where would this discussion lead the innocent other than soothing the ego while spouting fraud and lies?

We're still chasing the elusive dollar with the usual myopic view. Well, it is still earned the old-fashioned way. Finally, with the fiscal cogs, nuts, bolts, and tire coming off our wagon, isn't it time to engage meaningful organization in the development of governance

via fully considered socioeconomic plan to commence the long journey to recovery?

Immigration debate

We use the term "culture" to justify "indigenous only" mindset, therefore the recommendation to delete pathway to citizenship provision under S. 744. It's your right to say your piece. But the anomaly is in the obvious lack of enforcement of INS law that focuses on jurisdiction.

It says, "The language of the 1866 Civil Rights Act, from which the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment was derived, provides the key to its meaning. The 1866 Act provides: 'All persons born in the United States, and not subject to any foreign power, excluding Indians not taxed, are hereby declared to be citizens of the United States.'"

"As this formulation makes clear, any child born on U.S. soil to parents who were temporary visitors to this country and who, as a result of the foreign citizenship of the child's parents, remained a citizen or subject of the parents' home country, was not entitled to claim the birthright citizenship provided by the 1866 Act."

This should have been the corpus of House Resolution 18-34, including bringing to the attention of INS the enforcement of this provision forthwith. It would have spared everybody the vitriolic and racist exchanges best left unsaid. I hope the purposeful omission of enforcing the law by INS isn't a design to instigate disruption between host and aspirants of residency. But then how do we know that such inaction isn't a fully concocted pretense of ignorance of the law?

Driftwood in an open ocean

The obvious lack of a cohesive definition of our future basically turns the fate of these isles to one of a piece of driftwood out in the open ocean. It's tossed about aimlessly as waves, the wind and currents whip it about. Is this our future in microcosm?

More often than not, my aspiration is one of optimism, however guarded but reality check says otherwise. Let's, however, assume that by accident we manage to put our fuzzy arithmetic together with the right derivatives. Here's the CNMI 20 years from today:

sented in her home as a black man, and as a white man everywhere else.

"That this genial, jolly man can only be seen as white—and consequently, that a Santa of any other hue is merely a 'joke' or a chance to trudge out racist stereotypes," she wrote, "helps perpetuate the whole 'white-as-default' notion endemic to American culture."

To help children avoid the "insecurity and shame" that she felt as a black child in a world of white Santas, Harris lightheartedly suggested that Santa be thought of not as an old white guy, but as a penguin—a cute, cuddly, black-and-white creature.

It's really not worth getting into it about the race of Santa Claus, who I am pretty sure can be whatever color you want him to be—because that's just how damn magical he is.

As Americans enjoyed their annual Yuletide tradition of politicizing Christmas, a much greater outrage took place across the Atlantic Ocean.

An English cleric who is to retire at the end of the year—and not a moment too soon—apologized after telling schoolchildren in a market town 100 miles west of London that Santa Claus is not real.

According to the *Daily Telegraph*, children ages 5 to 11 came

challenge for our boats, which are directly exposed to waves coming in from the channel. Off-loading cargo is a challenge at the Rota Dock, which lacks equipment to handle some items like cars. Drive-on and drive-off items, like cars, are a challenge for us. There are vessels specifically designed for that kind of activity as you know.

I can tell that Mr. Atalig is angry and he should be, but it is misdirected anger. There are improvements that the government could have undertaken to improve access to the Rota dock over the years but they haven't chosen to do this. I recommend that Mr. Atalig direct his anger at the elected leaders who should have given more thought to the socioeconomic development of Rota. Shippers are not responsible for the mass exodus of people from Rota or the Commonwealth in general. Shippers are not responsible for the high cost of fuel. Fuel cost is higher

Fight for landowners of public lands

Dear Precinct 5 representatives: Now that the final selection of the winning bidder for the public land beach property located in San Antonio, Saipan, namely Lot 004 I 40, will be decided by Gov. Eloy Inos, we, the residents of Kagman III and Kagman IV, are asking you to lobby with the governor for the "public contribution" of the winning investor to get the "best and final offer" to the NMDs for the financing of the asphalt paving of all unpaved roads in Kagman III and Kagman IV Subdivisions, to be shared equally among the winning bidders, to include the Marpi beachfront properties.

By **JOHN DELROSARIO**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands.

The military became a major sector in the islands supporting U.S. security in Asia and the Pacific. Communities were established on Tinian, southern Saipan, and Pagan. The push for ethnic hegemony slowly disappeared in the rear mirror. Sustaining it turns problematic as more of our people became mobile and moved elsewhere. The CNMI became "home" mostly in memory. Why do I feel this way?

There's a grand design somewhere back in the '60s that opened the fertile ground for eventual militarization of the entire Marianas Archipelago. Slowly, we would be dealing with the military constantly too.

Coupled with the lack of conscious leadership at home, what's our future in scattershot followership? While the military tries to assimilate diplomatically into the local community, it never loses sight of its mission and purpose with or without our aspirations. Divide and conquer isn't from without but within.

Opportunities at home are nonexistent. Thus our educated children aren't necessarily enamored returning home. Fully suited communities throughout the country abound.

Lest we forget, people move elsewhere to explore filial opportunities. It's the opportunity to establish and nurture decent lifestyles in communities that are endowed with a good educational system, job opportunities, healthcare, entrepreneurship, and upward mobility.

Opportunities at home have diminished significantly, thus the persistent exodus of more locals. But then let's keep singing "Are you sleeping..." It fits the bill of dystopia—where nothing works—we've nursed for so long, to our gradual demise.

Unless we remap paradigms to rein in economic prosperity and opportunities, we'd be landing in the magma-ridden playground of hell—a scene after an election—where there's nothing downstairs but misery, bubonic plague, and death.

Santa's existential dilemma: To be white, black or a penguin?

By **ROBIN ABCARIAN**
LOS ANGELES TIMES

In recent Santa Claus news:

Kudos to Megyn Kelly who has done the impossible and upped the ante in the already ridiculous "war on Christmas." The Fox News personality has added an even sillier race component to an already silly debate.

After insisting to Jay Leno, as Kelly did the other night, that she's a "straight news anchor ... not one of the opinion hosts," she informed her viewers Wednesday with perfect certainty that both Santa Claus and Jesus are white, and those who disagree can get over themselves.

"He's a historical figure, that's a verifiable fact," Kelly said of Jesus. "As is Santa. I just want kids to know that. How do you revise it in the middle of the legacy in the story and change Santa from white to black?"

The discussion was occasioned by an essay by Slate blogger Aisha Harris, who wrote that she felt confused as a child when Santa was repre-

home from their Chippenham school "shell shocked" after the Rev. Simon Tatton-Brown had a problem with his notes during his annual Christmas address and was forced to ad lib:

"He told children that Father Christmas was based on a grisly legend about Saint Nicholas, who brought three murdered children back to life. The Church of England vicar described how the youngsters were killed by an evil butcher and placed in a barrel to be pickled and sold as ham. ... It is reported he also claimed Christmas stockings exist only due to a myth about Saint Nicholas dropping a gift down a poor family's chimney which happened to land in a sock hung by the fire to dry," the *Daily Telegraph* reported.

First off, English school children certainly shell shock more easily than they used to.

And second, that guy should definitely get a lump of coal in his stocking.

Or maybe a ham sandwich...

Robin Abcarian is a columnist for the Los Angeles Times.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Misdirected anger

Recently Frank M. Atalig of Rota wrote an impassioned letter pleading for help with the cost of shipping goods to Rota. In it, Mr. Atalig levied some complaints against shipping companies for allegedly "milking us with their practices."

I appreciate Mr. Atalig's direct treatment of the issue and believe that a plainspoken reply is in order.

In today's environment, transporting goods to Rota is a losing proposition. Traffic, meaning the volume of cargo moving in and out of Rota, is low. The cost of our operation to Rota is not covered by the volume of cargo going into or going out from Rota. The economies of scale are simply not present at the moment and yet we continue our service to Rota even when the traffic volume doesn't justify the run. We do this at a loss. Some of the puddle jumpers, the other milk-run operators, probably do the same thing; sometimes for a profit, sometimes at a loss. This is what some companies in the Commonwealth have done and will continue to do in the spirit of civic responsibility.

There are times, Mr. Atalig observes, when the weather is clear, but shippers still don't come. To this I reply by saying the sky may be blue and the sun shining, but the swells even at two to three feet make it a

in the CNMI than just about everywhere in the United States. The same goes for power rates that we pay here on Saipan.

I respect your views and understand your frustration, no doubt shared by many others on Rota, but shippers cannot answer for the general deterioration of the economy on Rota or in the CNMI. I believe that the government can and should do more to improve the livelihoods of its citizens and that is where I think your considerable energy and talent should be directed.

Please let me know if there is anything I can do to further your efforts in this regard.

Juan S. Tenorio (Santiago)

President, Saipan Shipping Company

Do not forget that all public lands are collectively owned by the people of Northern Marianas descent, *not* the CNMI government. So please fight for the landowners, the NMDs, and *not* for local leaders' friends and business associates.

Thank you for your grave concern for the Kagman III and Kagman IV NMD residents.






Vicente M. Sablan

Kagman III, Saipan

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
				
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 15 to 20 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲ 86° ▼ 76°	▲ 87° ▼ 77°	▲ 87° ▼ 77°	▲ 87° ▼ 77°	▲ 87° ▼ 77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	▲ 86 ▼ 78
Palau	Thunderstorms	▲ 85 ▼ 77
Yap	Cloudy	▲ 90 ▼ 78
Chuuk	Showers	▲ 87 ▼ 80
Pohnpei	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 78
Kosrae	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 78
Majuro	Showers	▲ 85 ▼ 79

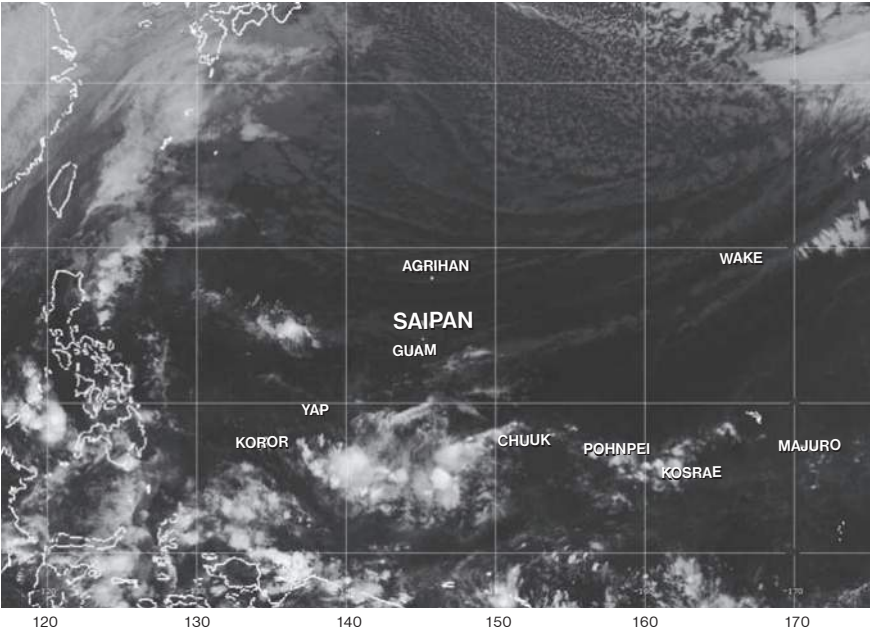
Around The Globe

Auckland	Mostly Sunny	▲ 69 ▼ 60
Beijing	Sunny	▲ 39 ▼ 16
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲ 62 ▼ 53
Honolulu	Sunny	▲ 81 ▼ 70
London	Showers	▲ 46 ▼ 38
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	▲ 70 ▼ 49
Manila	Thundershowers	▲ 85 ▼ 78
Melbourne	Mostly Cloudy	▲ 98 ▼ 67
Miami	Partly Cloudy	▲ 78 ▼ 68
New York	Sunny	▲ 35 ▼ 25
Osaka	Showers	▲ 53 ▼ 39
Paris	Rain	▲ 49 ▼ 36
Pusan	Windy	▲ 42 ▼ 31
Rome	Partly Cloudy	▲ 56 ▼ 48
Salem	Showers	▲ 41 ▼ 27
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	▲ 58 ▼ 43
Seoul	Partly Cloudy	▲ 29 ▼ 17
Tokyo	Showers	▲ 51 ▼ 40
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲ 38 ▼ 29

Tides

Saipan Harbor			
2:13 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
9:14 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
2:41 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.2 Feet
7:22 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2013
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A weak cold front curves southwestward from 25N174E to 19N160E then continues as a shear line to just north of Saipan and finally to beyond 130E at 14N. Patchy cloudiness and scattered showers are found along and up to 200 miles north of this boundary between 130E and 150E. This area includes most of the CNMI. An old shear line is generating patchy low clouds and light showers south and east of the Marianas within 75 miles of a line from 12N144E to 15N158E. A trade-wind disturbance is triggering scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms southwest of Chuuk lagoon between 3N and 7N from 143E to 152E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:37 AM	5:50 PM
Thursday	6:37 AM	5:51 PM
Friday	6:38 AM	5:51 PM
Saturday	6:38 AM	5:52 PM
Sunday	6:39 AM	5:52 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	6:38 PM	6:57 AM
Thursday	7:27 PM	7:44 AM
Friday	8:15 PM	8:27 AM
Saturday	9:03 PM	9:09 AM
Sunday	9:51 PM	9:49 AM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

- PICTURES**
 - ISLAND SNAPSHOTS Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
 - BIRTHDAY GREETINGS A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
- ANNOUNCEMENTS**
 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

- For pictures:**
- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
 - Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
 - Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
- For announcements:**
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when),

- the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

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 - Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
- To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

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- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 2, 2013

DEPARTURES	ARRIVALS
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM) UA5070 4:15am 5:05am Daily UA5068 8:40am 9:30am Daily UA5038 2:20pm 3:10pm 2, 3, 6 UA5078 6:05pm 6:55pm Daily UA5072 9:50pm 10:40pm Daily	GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN UA5069 2:45am 3:35am Daily UA5071 7:15am 8:05am Daily UA5039 12:10pm 1:00pm 1, 4, 5, 7 UA5077 4:45pm 5:35pm Daily UA5079 8:30pm 9:20pm Daily
SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP) UA5039 1:35pm 2:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	GUAM (GUM)-ROTA (ROP) UA5038 12:10pm 12:45pm 2, 3, 6
ROTA (ROP)-GUAM (GUM) UA5039 2:40pm 3:10pm 1, 4, 5, 7	ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN UA5038 1:15pm 1:50pm 2, 3, 6
SAIPAN-PALAU (ROR) DL287 6:05am 11:25pm 2, 6 via NRT	PALAU (ROR)-SAIPAN DL298 4:35am 3:00pm 3, 7 via NRT
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT) DL287 6:05am 8:40am 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 DL297 4:30pm 7:20pm Daily	NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN DL298 10:25am 3:00pm Daily DL288 8:55pm 1:30am+1 1, 3, 4, 5, 7
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS) OZ608 3:10am 6:20am 1, 4, 5, 7	BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN OZ607 9:00pm 1:50am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN) OZ606 2:10am 6:00am 1 DZ102 2:20am 5:50am 3 OZ606 2:40am 6:30am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 OZ6063 3:30am 7:20am 4, 7 DZ104 2:00pm 5:30pm 6 OZ604 3:20pm 7:10pm Daily	SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN DZ101 8:30am 2:00pm 3 OZ603 9:00am 2:20pm Daily DZ103 7:30pm 1:00am+1 6 OZ605 7:40pm 1:00am+1 7 OZ605 8:10pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 OZ6053 9:10pm 2:30am+1 3, 6
SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG) 3U8648 6:10am 8:40am 1, 4, 5, 7	SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN 3U8647 10:40pm 5:00am+1 3, 4, 6, 7
SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK) MU764 4:10am 8:00am 1, 5	BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN MU763 7:55pm 3:10am+1 4, 7
SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN) 3U8646 4:20am 7:30am 2, 6	GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN 3U8645 7:40pm 3:00am+1 1, 5
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL) OZ606/701 2:10am 11:15am 1 via ICN OZ606/701 2:40am 11:15am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5070/191 4:15am 9:05am 3, 6 via GUM DL287/473 6:05am 10:30pm 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via NRT UA5068/PR111 8:40am 4:45pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM UA5038/183 2:20pm 9:30pm 2 via GUM UA5078/183 6:05pm 9:50pm 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM OZ604/703 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN OZ704/603 12:10am 2:20pm Daily PR110/UA5072 7:35am 5:35pm 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM DL172/288 7:40am 1:30am+1 1, 3, 4, 5, 7 via NRT UA190/5079 10:00am 5:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ702/605 12:30pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA184/5071 10:55pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM UA184/5071 11:59pm 8:05am+1 2, 5 via GUM
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG) OZ606/721 2:10am 11:50am 1 via ICN OZ606/721 2:40am 11:50am 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN UA5068/179 8:40am 10:35pm 1, 5 via GUM UA5038/179 2:20pm 10:35pm 3, 6 via GUM OZ604/749 3:20pm 11:00pm Daily via ICN	HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN OZ746/603 12:30am 2:20pm Daily via ICN OZ722/605 1:15pm 1:00am+1 7 via ICN OZ724/605 1:50pm 1:30am+1 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN UA180/5071 11:10pm 8:05am+1 1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U: Sichuan Airlines; MU: China Eastern; UA: United Airlines; DL: Delta Airlines; OZ: Asiana; VLK: Vladivostok Air; SYL: Yakutia Air; D: Dynamic Airways.

ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The *Saipan Tribune* is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 115	13:00	13:10	Daily
FRE 100	7:30	8:00	Daily	FRE 117	14:30	14:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 119	16:00	16:10	Daily
FRE 100	8:20	8:50	Daily	FRE 121	16:40	16:50	Daily
Guam-Rota				FRE 123	17:40	17:50	Daily
FRE 300	17:00	17:30	Daily	FRE 125	18:30	18:40	Daily
Rota-Saipan							
FRE 100	17:50	18:20	Daily				
Saipan-Rota				Tinian-Saipan			
FRE 200	9:30	10:00	Daily	FRE 102	7:05	7:15	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 104	7:50	8:00	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 106	8:20	8:30	Daily
FRE 400	18:55	19:25	Daily	FRE 108	9:00	9:10	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 110	10:00	10:10	Daily
FRE 400	19:40	20:10	Daily	FRE 112	11:05	11:15	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 114	12:00	12:10	Daily
FRE 101	6:45	6:55	Daily	FRE 116	13:30	13:40	Daily
FRE 103	7:30	7:40	Daily	FRE 118	14:50	15:00	Daily
FRE 105	8:00	8:10	Daily	FRE 120	16:20	16:30	Daily
FRE 107	8:40	8:50	Daily	FRE 122	17:00	17:10	Daily
FRE 109	9:10	9:20	Daily	FRE 124	18:05	18:15	Daily
FRE 111	10:45	10:55	Daily	FRE 126	18:50	19:00	Daily



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Marines complete simulated 'surge' operation during FFII

TINIAN, Northern Mariana Islands—Marines and sailors completed simulated surge operations during Exercise Forager Fury II on Dec. 9-13.

Forager Fury II is an annual training exercise conducted by Marine Aircraft Group 12 that rehearses the aircraft group's ability to rapidly project avia-

tion combat power anywhere in the Pacific area of operations. It is conducted in the territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The surge is a 72-hour continuous period where all the aviation assets on Tinian and Guam operate around the clock,

according to Lt. Col. Howard Eyth, commanding officer of Marine Wing Support Squadron 171, Marine Aircraft Group 12, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

"The surge is essentially the heart of the exercise," said Eyth. "It is a 72-hour period in which MAG-12 endeavors to generate

as many combat stories as possible and sustain them throughout that period of time. We do so by launching and recovering aircraft both from Guam and two forward arming and refueling points on Tinian, one at North Field and one at West Field."

The training opportunities for the MAG in the Marianas are

ones not accessible in mainland Japan, according to Maj. Thomas Mondoux, executive officer of MWSS-171.

"It's an excellent opportunity for us to showcase the full capabilities of our equipment and the capabilities that are in an MWSS," said Mondoux. "Also, it gives us an opportunity to op-

erate in an austere environment to fully test the limitations of our people and equipment when we operate under a continuous surge it helps identify where our frictions points are and forces us to maximize performance of our personnel and equipment."

Exercise Forager Fury II is scheduled to end on Dec. 20. **(PR)**

CLC-36 keep vehicles, equipment running at FFII



Marines adjust a tire for a tractor rubber tired articulated steering multipurpose vehicle on Dec. 15 at Tinian's North Field during Exercise Forager Fury II.

By **LANCE CPL. ANTONIO RUBIO**
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION IWAKUNI

TINIAN, Northern Mariana Island—Marines with Combat Logistic Company 36 repaired a tractor rubber-tired articulated steering multipurpose vehicle on

Dec. 15 at Tinian's North Field to exercise unit capabilities and cross train with Marines from other sections participating in Exercise Forager Fury II.

The training allows CLC-36 to demonstrate the necessity for their presence and gives the Ma-

lines an opportunity to work in a field environment. The Marines are with CLC-36, currently assigned to MAG-12, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

Forager Fury II is a joint exercise and its purpose is to employ

and assess combat power generation in a deployed and austere environment.

"CLC-36 mission was to provide maintenance to heavy equipment assets, motor transportation assets and utilities assets," said Capt. Roderick Sin-

gleton, executive officer with CLC-36. "With the integration [Marine Wing Support Squadron 171], we've grown close relationships and strengthen our unit effort so they can understand what we can do, what we can provide and the forces we can bring. Now MWSS-171 understands how valuable we actually are to them."

The work load proved itself to be an exceptional challenge as CLC-36 repaired more than 70 items including but not limited to TRAMs, generators and other various equipment within FFII.

"The biggest successful for was being able to assist heavy equipment operations and clear the runways," said Staff Sgt. Horton Brickman, staff non-commissioned officer with CLC-36. "A TRAM tire goes down and with our turn-around rate so successful we'll get that TRAM back up within that same day."

Forager Fury II provided CLC-36 Marines the opportunity to cross train with heavy equipment and motor transportation Marines with MWSS-171, Marine Aircraft Group 12, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, III Marine Expeditionary Force.

"Within our detachment, it didn't matter what type of mechanic the Marine was, if they were a utilities mechanic, generator mechanic or motor transportation mechanic, we helped where ever we could," said Brickman.

"It was a good time for the Marines to cross train and appreciate each other's [military occupational specialties]"

The opportunity to work in an austere environment afforded the Marines a chance to become innovative because they had to think outside the box, not having all the assets they do in the rear, according to Brickman. This helps further their knowledge and expertise in the event they end up deploying; they ready to work instead of delaying work trying to assess the situation.

"I'm finding creative ways to do maintenance out in the field," said Lance Cpl. Michael Mayberry, generator mechanic with CLC-36. "Thinking outside the box and making solutions and fixes for problems that I normally wouldn't have the chance to do in a garrison environment has made me more well-verse. Out here, we have to improvise and use what we have on hand."

Forager Fury II increases operational readiness and improves core expeditionary combat readiness of not just MAG-12, III MEF, but for CLC-36 as well showcasing what they can bring to the fight.

"Our Marines made themselves extreme valuable out here during the exercise providing outstanding combat logistic support to MWSS-171 with regards to field maintenance, and field supply as well," said Singleton. "The exercise has been successful and the Marines have made a name for themselves here doing great work."



Cpl. Jacorie Colbert weaves chains around the tire of a tractor rubber tired articulated steering multipurpose vehicle on Dec. 15 at Tinian's North Field during Exercise Forager Fury II.



Marines adjust rimes for a tractor rubber tired articulated steering multipurpose vehicle on Dec. 15 at Tinian's North Field during Exercise Forager Fury II.

Business

FDA: Anti-bacterial soaps may not curb bacteria

WASHINGTON (AP)—After more than 40 years of study, the U.S. government says it has found no evidence that common anti-bacterial soaps prevent the spread of germs, and regulators want the makers of Dawn, Dial and other household staples to prove that their products do not pose health risks to consumers.

Scientists at the Food and Drug Administration announced Monday that they are revisiting the safety of triclosan and other sanitizing agents found in soap in countless kitchens and bathrooms. Recent studies suggest triclosan and similar substances can interfere with hormone levels in lab animals and spur the growth of drug-resistant bacteria.

The government’s preliminary ruling lends new support to outside researchers who have long argued that the chemicals are, at best, ineffective and at worst, a threat to public health.

“The FDA is finally making a judgment call here and asking industry to show us that these products are better than soap and water, and the data don’t substantiate that,” said Stuart Levy of the Tufts University School of Medicine.

While the rule only applies to personal hygiene products, it has implications for a broader \$1 billion industry that includes thousands of anti-bacterial products, including kitchen knives, toys, pacifiers and toothpaste. Over the last 20 years,

companies have added triclosan and other cleaners to thousands of household products, touting their germ-killing benefits.

Under a proposed rule released Monday, the agency will require manufacturers to prove that anti-bacterial soaps are safe and more effective than plain soap and water. Products that are not shown to be safe and effective by late 2016 would have to be reformulated, relabeled or removed from the market.

“I suspect there are a lot of consumers who assume that by using an anti-bacterial soap product, they are protecting themselves from illness, protecting their families,” said Sandra Kweder, deputy director in the FDA’s drug center. “But

we don’t have any evidence that that is really the case over simple soap and water.”

A spokesman for the cleaning product industry said the FDA already has “a wealth of data” showing the benefits of anti-bacterial products.

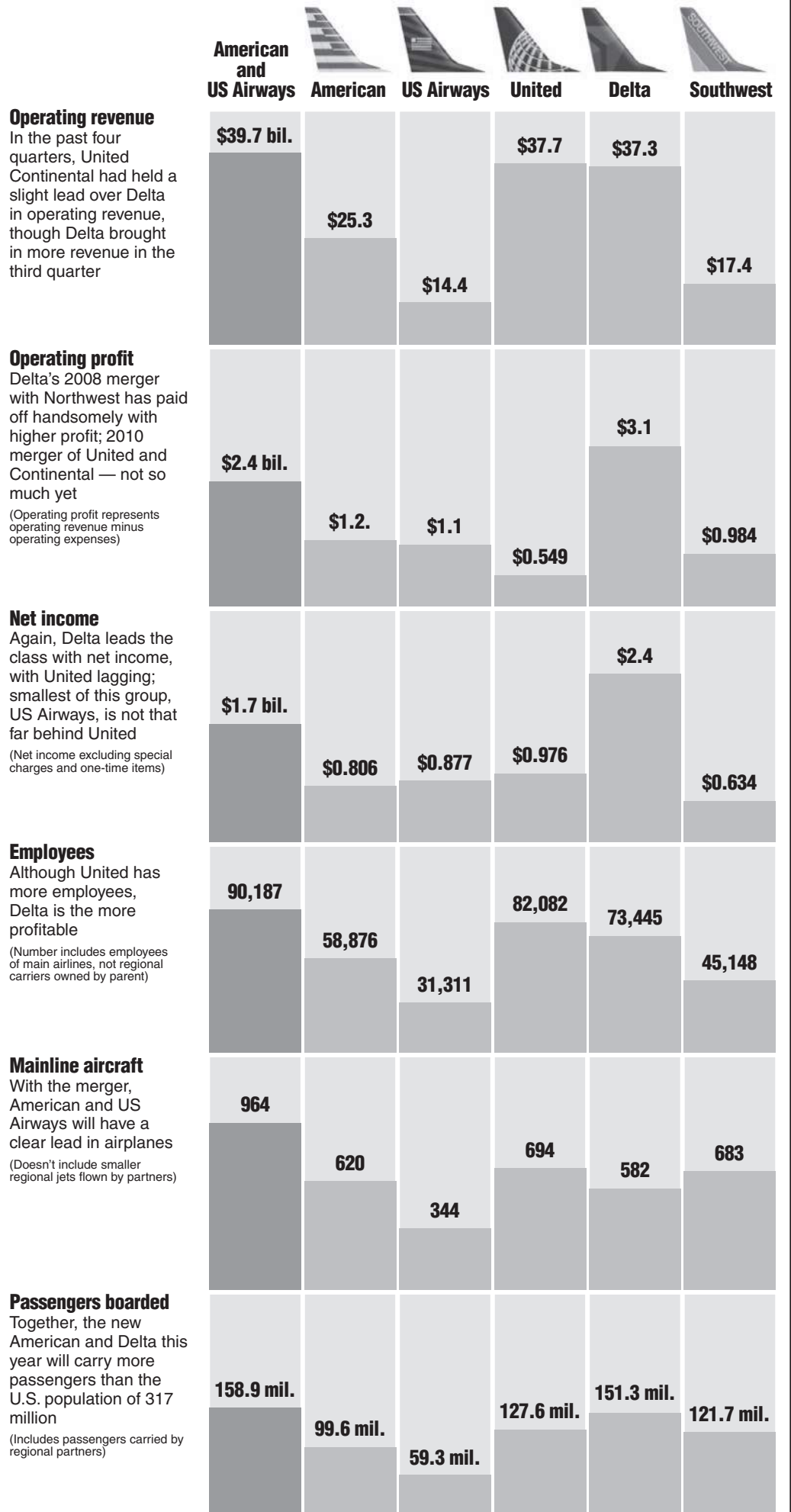
Monday’s action affects virtually all soap products labeled anti-bacterial, including popular brands from CVS, Bath and Body Works, Ajax and many other companies.

The rule does not apply to hand sanitizers, most of which use alcohol rather than anti-bacterial chemicals.

An FDA analysis estimates it will cost companies \$112.2 million to \$368.8 million to comply with the new regulations, including reformulating some products and removing marketing claims from others.

Back on the top cloud

Before its merger with US Airways, American Airlines ranked No. 3 among air carriers in size by revenue, fleet and passengers. But the marriage of US Airways and American’s parent, AMR, puts the new company, American Airlines Group, back on top. That ends a five-year fall after the Delta Air Lines-Northwest Airlines and United Airlines-Continental Airlines mergers. Biggest doesn’t mean best, of course. But it’s better to be the lead dog on the sled team.



NOTE: Revenue, profit and income data is for the 12 months ending Sept. 30; employees and aircraft data are for Sept. 30; passenger data is for 11 months, 2013
Source: The airlines, U.S. Bureau of Transportation Statistics, Dallas Morning News research
Graphic: Terry Maxon, Troy Oxford, The Dallas Morning News

Mega Millions jackpot climbs to \$586 million

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP)—The Mega Millions jackpot inched toward a U.S. lottery record Monday as it soared to \$586 million amid a frenzy of ticket purchases, raising the possibility that the prize could pass the once-unthinkable \$1 billion mark by Christmas Eve should nobody win before then.

Paula Otto, executive director of the Virginia Lottery and lead director for Mega Millions, said ticket sales are ahead of projections for Tuesday’s drawing, increasing the likelihood it could shatter the current record of \$656 million, set in a March 2012 Mega Millions drawing.

That was enough for Drew Gentsch to buy one ticket Monday morning. The attorney from Des Moines never plays, but the ballooning jackpot was too good to pass up.

“I think it’s ridiculous but you have to dream big,” he said. “The odds of winning are so low, there’s no real reason to play. But it’s fun to do so once in a while.”

The large Mega Millions prize is the product of a major game revamp in October that dramatically lowered the odds of winning the jackpot. If a winner isn’t selected Tuesday night and it rolls over past the next drawing scheduled Friday night, Otto predicts the jackpot will reach \$1 billion—an unheard-of amount for Mega Millions or Powerball, the nation’s two main lottery games.

“We had predicted last week that if we are still on the same roll on Christmas Eve, we’ll definitely be over a billion,” she said.

Scott Norris, a mathematician from Southern Methodist University, said he estimates around 700 million more tickets must be sold without producing a winner for the jackpot to reach \$1 billion on this run. He puts the odds of that around 6 percent.

Norris emphasized his calculation does not take into ac-

A long shot

Mega Millions’ jackpot has been growing since October when the odds were lengthened and has rolled over 20 times without a winner.

What was the Mega Millions makeover?

- The range of the first five numbers needed for a jackpot win was raised to 1 to 75 from 1 to 56
- The sixth — the gold ball number — is now from 1 to 15, rather than 1 to 46
- The goal was to create bigger jackpots to compete with the massive jackpots of Powerball, which raised ticket prices to \$2 in January 2012, increasing the amount of money in the pot

What are the new odds?

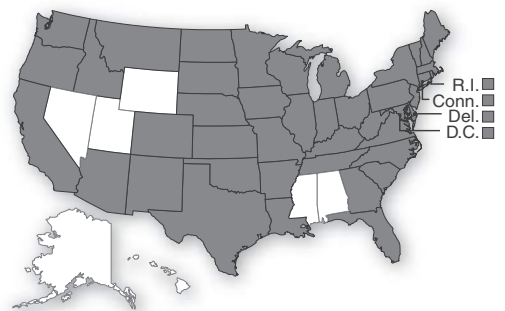
Match	Match	Prize	Chances
5	+ 1	Jackpot	1 in 258,890,805
5	+ -	\$1,000,000	1 in 18,492,204
4	+ 1	\$5,000	1 in 739,688
4	+ 0	\$500	1 in 52, 835
3	+ 1	\$50	1 in 10,720
3	+ 0	\$5	1 in 766
2	+ 1	\$5	1 in 473
1	+ 1	\$2	1 in 56
0	+ 1	\$1	1 in 21

Where does the revenue go?

- About half the revenue from ticket sales goes to prizes
- Remainder is split among stores, marketers and operations and the states; state rules for how lottery is used vary

Where is Mega Millions played?

■ 43 states, the District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands (not shown) have this lottery



© 2013 MCT
Source: Mega Millions, NBC News
Graphic: Pat Carr

count the extra \$1 that players can throw in for the Megaplier option, which allows them to increase their non-jackpot prize by up to five times.

John Hagerty, a spokesman for the Virginia Lottery, said officials can’t confirm Norris’ calculation. He said there’s no clear number for sales if the jackpot rolls past Tuesday, so they can’t accurately calculate what percentage of the possible combinations will be covered.

The current jackpot, which is the fourth largest in U.S. history and closely trails the \$587.5 million and \$590.5 million set by Powerball, has had heavy

sales over the last several days. Otto noted that the higher the jackpot, the higher the sales. For example, when the jackpot was \$99 million on Nov. 5, lottery officials sold just over \$20 million worth of tickets. For Friday’s then-\$425 million jackpot, \$168 million worth of tickets were sold.

Otto said it’s likely the jackpot will be increased again after lottery officials meet Tuesday morning to discuss sales. Between 65 and 70 percent of the roughly 259 million possible number combinations will be in play when the numbers are drawn, Otto estimated.

Nation

Judge: NSA program is likely unconstitutional

WASHINGTON (AP)—In a ruling with potentially far-reaching consequences, a federal judge declared Monday that the National Security Agency's bulk collection of millions of Americans' telephone records likely violates the U.S. Constitution's ban on unreasonable search. The ruling, filled with blistering criticism of the Obama administration's arguments, is the first of its kind on the controversial program.

Even if NSA's "metadata" collection of records should pass constitutional muster, the judge said, there is little evidence it has ever prevented a terrorist attack. The collection program was disclosed by former NSA systems analyst Edward Snowden, provoking a heated national and international debate.

U.S. District Court Judge Richard Leon granted a preliminary injunction against the collecting of the phone records of two men who had challenged the program and said any such records for the men should be destroyed. But he put enforcement of that decision on hold pending a near-certain government appeal, which may well end up at the Supreme Court.

The injunction applies only to the two individual plaintiffs, but the ruling is likely to open the door to much broader challenges to the records collection and storage.

The plaintiffs are Larry Klayman, a conservative lawyer, and Charles Strange, who is the father of a cryptologist technician who was killed in Afghanistan when his helicopter was shot

down in 2011. The son worked for the NSA and support personnel for Navy SEAL Team VI.

Leon, an appointee of President George W. Bush, ruled that the two men "have a substantial likelihood of showing" that their privacy interests outweigh the government's interest in collecting the data "and therefore the NSA's bulk collection program is indeed an unreasonable search under the Constitution's Fourth Amendment."

"I have little doubt that the author of our Constitution, James Madison, who cautioned us to beware 'the abridgment of freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments by those in power,' would be aghast," he declared.

In addition to civil liberties critics, big communications companies are unhappy with the NSA program, concerned about a loss of business from major clients who are worried about government snooping. President Barack Obama will meet Tuesday with executives from leading technology companies. The meeting was previously scheduled, but the NSA program is sure to be on the agenda, and now the court ruling will be in the mix.

After the ruling, Andrew C. Ames, a spokesman for the Justice Department's National Security Division, said in a statement, "We've seen the opinion and are studying it. We believe the program is constitutional as previous judges have found. We have no further comment at this time."

Snowden, in a statement pro-



This June 6, 2013 file photo shows a sign outside the National Security Agency (NSA) campus in Fort Meade, Md.

AP

vided to reporter Glenn Greenwald and obtained by The Associated Press, said, "I acted on my belief that the NSA's mass surveillance programs would not withstand a constitutional challenge and that the American public deserved a chance to see these issues determined by open courts. Today, a secret program authorized by a secret court was, when exposed to the light of day, found to violate Americans' rights. It is the first of many."

Budget legislation gains GOP support

WASHINGTON (AP)—Bipartisan legislation to soften across-the-board spending cuts gained ground among Senate Republicans on Monday and Democrats expressed optimism it would gain the 60 votes needed to pass by week's end.

Republican Sens. Orrin Hatch of Utah and Georgians Johnny Isakson and Saxby Chambliss of Georgia announced they would vote to send the measure over a critical hurdle in a test vote set for Tuesday, bringing the number of GOP lawmakers

to seven. Sen. John Hoeven of North Dakota said he was inclined to join them.

The announcements more than offset an announcement from Sen. Richard Burr, R-N.C., who reversed course and said he would vote to block the bill.

Given the uncertainty, Democrats, who control 55 seats, were under pressure to avoid defections on the vote.

The measure at the center of the maneuvering would restore about \$63 billion in across-the-board cuts scheduled to take effect in the current budget year and the next one.

To offset the spending increases, the White House-backed legislation calls for \$85 billion in budget savings over the next decade, extending existing cuts to Medicare providers, for example, raising a security fee on airline tickets and requiring federal civilian employees to pay a greater share of their own pensions.

Another element, to save about \$6.3 billion over a decade by holding down increases in military retirement pay, has drawn opposition from veterans groups and Republican Sens. Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, Roger Wicker of Mississippi and Lindsey Graham of South Carolina.

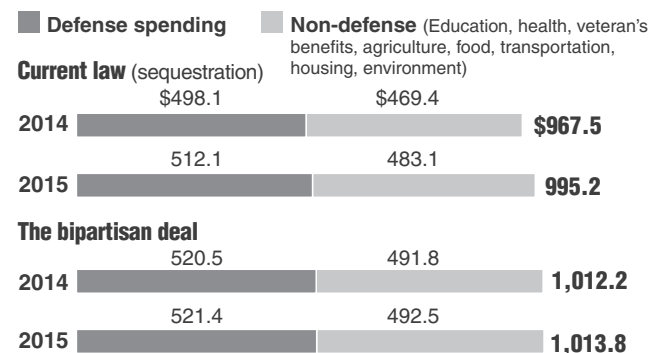
Under the provision, annual cost of living increases would be held slightly under the rate of inflation for military retirees under the age of 62. In a statement issued last week, the three senators said a 42-year-old sergeant first class retiring after 20 years would lose about \$72,000 in income over his lifetime.

What's in the budget deal

The bipartisan budget deal could end years of fiscal standoffs and keep the government running beyond Jan. 15, if both the House and Senate pass it. How the deal eases the automatic spending cuts of sequestration:

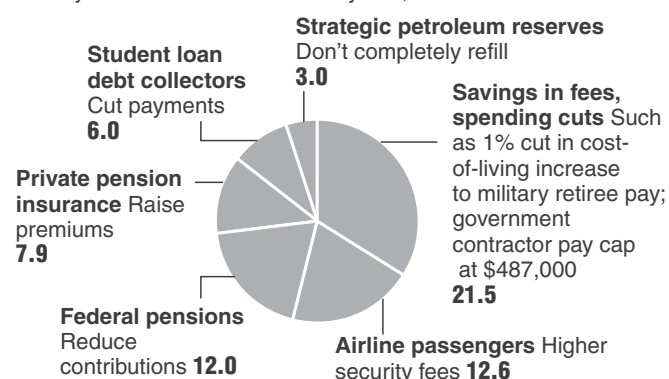
Current law vs. the deal

Both the deal and sequestration effect only discretionary spending, about 30 percent of the total U.S. budget; amounts in billions



Where the extra money comes from

No taxes would be raised to cover the budget deal's estimated \$63 billion of sequester relief for two years; here's where the money would come from over 10 years, in billions:



Source: U.S. House Budget Committee, National Journal
Graphic: Judy Treible

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ACROSS THE NATION

Big Sur fire destroys 15 homes, forces 100 to flee

BIG SUR, Calif. (AP)—A wildfire burning Monday in the Big Sur area of California destroyed at least 15 homes and forced about 100 people to evacuate as it chewed through dry vegetation on its way toward the ocean. No injuries were reported. The fire burned about 500 acres in the Pfeiffer Ridge area of Los Padres National Forest near state Highway 1, Los Padres National Forest spokesman Andrew Madsen said. Madsen said the fire destroyed the home of Big Sur Fire Chief Martha Karstens.

Pair plead guilty in Tulsa shooting rampage

TULSA, Okla. (AP)—Two men charged with first-degree murder and hate crimes in the shooting deaths of three people in Tulsa last year pleaded guilty Monday and were sentenced to life in prison without parole. Alvin Watts and Jake England changed their previous pleas of not guilty in Tulsa County District Court as part of a deal in which prosecutors agreed to spare the men the death penalty. Members of the victims' families also agreed to the punishment, prosecutors told the court. England, his voice cracking slightly as he read a prepared statement to the court, admitted going on the rampage with Watts with the aim of killing black people. England also apologized to the city's black community.

Sheriff: Ohio suspect last person seen with girl

WOOSTER, Ohio (AP)—A man accused of killing a 9-year-old neighbor and hiding her body in a trash bin had been building a snowman with her just hours before she was reported missing, investigators said Monday. Jerrod Metsker, 24, was the last person seen with the girl at the trailer park where they lived, a sheriff's investigator said. He later joined neighbors and relatives in a search for her, a neighbor said. Metsker was arrested Sunday, about 12 hours after deputies found second-grader Reann Murphy's body. A judge ordered him held in jail on a \$1 million bond after his appearance in court on an aggravated-murder charge.

No suspicious devices found at Harvard after email

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP)—Four buildings on Harvard University's campus were evacuated Monday after police received an email claiming that explosive devices may have been hidden inside, but after hours of searches and disruptions to final exams, no suspicious devices were found. The buildings were evacuated and access to Harvard Yard was restricted after the email was received at about 8:40 a.m. Monday, shortly before students were set to begin final exams. Investigators from several agencies searched the buildings for hours and cleared students to return to all four by mid-afternoon.

Asia

US ups security aid to Southeast Asia, criticizes China

HANOI, Vietnam (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry offered harsh words for China and new maritime security assistance for Southeast Asia on Monday to bolster countries facing growing Chinese assertiveness in a region where the two world powers are jockeying for influence.

Tensions are running high after a near-collision of U.S. and Chinese naval vessels this month and an air defense zone China has declared over an area that includes territory controlled by Japan, a U.S. ally. Those actions have raised fresh alarm as Beijing modernizes its military and claims a wide swath of ocean and disputed islands across the East and South China Seas.

Kerry used his first visit to Vietnam as America's top diplomat to reiterate support for diplomacy between Southeast Asia's regional bloc and Beijing over the territorial disputes, and to provide aid for Southeast Asian nations to defend waters they claim as their own.

Kerry pledged \$32.5 million, including up to \$18 million for Vietnam that will in-

clude five fast patrol boats for its Coast Guard. With the new contribution, U.S. maritime security assistance to the region will exceed \$156 million over the next two years, he said.

"Peace and stability in the South China Sea is a top priority for us and for countries in the region," Kerry told reporters at a news conference with Vietnamese Foreign Minister Pham Binh Minh. "We are very concerned by and strongly opposed to coercive and aggressive tactics to advance territorial claims."

The next stop on his Asian trip will be the Philippines, which lost control of a disputed reef in the South China Sea last year after a standoff with China. The U.S. is also helping equip the Philippines with ships and radar, and is in negotiations with Manila to increase the American military presence there.

Kerry said the new assistance was not a "quickly conceived reaction to any events in the region" but rather a



Kerry

"gradual and deliberate expansion" of U.S. support as part of the Obama administration's broader decision to refocus attention on the Asia-Pacific.

But the step is almost certain to anger Beijing, which bristles at what it sees as U.S. interference in areas it views as China's "core interest." Beijing looks dimly on Washington's push to increase the U.S. military presence and strengthen its alliances in Asia as it ends a decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, calling it an attempt to contain China.

In a reminder of the high stakes in play, U.S. and Chinese naval vessels came close to colliding in the South China Sea on Dec. 5, the most serious incident between the two navies since 2009.

The U.S. Pacific Fleet said Saturday that USS Cowpens was operating in international waters and had to maneuver to avoid hitting China's lone

aircraft carrier. The Liaoning, a symbol of China's ambition to develop a navy that operates further from its own shores, only entered service last year and was on its first-ever sea trials in the South China Sea.

Beijing has not formally commented on the incident, but the state-run Global Times newspaper reported on Monday that the U.S. ship had first harassed the Liaoning and its group of support ships, getting too close to a Chinese naval drill and entering within 30 miles of the Chinese fleet's "inner defense layer."

As China expands its navy's reach and starts to challenge decades of American military predominance in the region, it's becoming more common for vessels of the two nations to operate in close proximity. The Obama administration has made it a priority to seek closer military cooperation with China to prevent misunderstandings that could spark a clash—part of a broader push to foster friendly ties between the established world power and the emerging one.

US, Manila ink pact to repair ash-covered cemetery



In this July 1, 2011 file photo, a Clark Veterans Cemetery marker faces more than 8,000 tombstones at the sprawling Clark Economic Zone, a former U.S. Air Force base in Dau, Pampanga province in northern Philippines.

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—U.S. and Philippine officials signed an agreement Monday for Washington to restore a cemetery north of Manila where the graves of thousands of American service members and dependents have been covered in ash since Mount Pinatubo's 1991 eruption.

The accord calls for the American Battle Monuments Commission to repair and maintain the Clark Veterans Cemetery for at least 10 years. President Barack Obama had earlier signed a law to finance the Philippine-owned cemetery's upkeep.

The U.S. Air Force hastily abandoned Clark Air Base, where the cemetery is located, after Mount Pinatubo's eruption. In 1994, American veterans were shocked to find the 7-hectare (17-acre) cemetery covered in ash and weeds with half of its old

steel fence looted. They cleaned up the graves but have since struggled to maintain the cemetery through volunteer work and donations.

Although the cemetery looks tidier today, it is still covered by about a foot (30 centimeters) of ash, partially burying tombstones and obscuring names, dates and epitaphs.

American veterans, who have been campaigning to prod the U.S. government to take charge of the cemetery's repair and maintenance, welcomed the agreement, which was signed by U.S. Ambassador Philip Goldberg and Arnel Casanova, president of Manila's Bases Conversion and Development Authority.

"This brings to a close a three-year campaign effort to get the U.S. cemetery to be remembered," said former Navy Capt. Dennis Wright, who saw

action in Vietnam and is now a business executive in Clark, which has become a bustling industrial and recreation center.

"We used to call it the cemetery that America forgot," he said.

John Gilbert, a retired U.S. Army officer who heads a group of American veterans at Clark, said initial U.S. government funding of \$5 million would bring the cemetery at par with other beautifully landscaped burial grounds for U.S. veterans in Manila and elsewhere.

Additional U.S. funding would be needed to construct a visitors' center and maintain the property.

The cemetery holds the remains of 8,600 people, including 2,200 Americans and nearly 700 allied Philippine Scouts who took part in conflicts from the early 1900s to the resistance against brutal Japanese occupation in

World War II.

Clark's dead also include military dependents and civilians who worked for the U.S. wartime government and at least 2,139 mostly unidentified soldiers whose marble tombstones are labeled "Unknown."

Once developed and possibly turned into a war memorial, the cemetery could draw in tourists, Philippine officials have said.

Before the U.S. government decided to take charge of the cemetery, Clark's elderly veterans worried about who would look after the cemetery as their ranks dwindle. An increasing number of veterans have passed away and been buried at the cemetery.

Gilbert said his group has a motto, "Let no veteran be forgotten."

"Today," he said, "we went a long way to make that happen."

ASIAN BRIEFS

Kerry in Philippines to show US support

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry is in the Philippines to show American backing for its longtime ally and inspect typhoon recovery efforts. Kerry arrived Tuesday in Manila from Hanoi, where a day earlier he pledged \$32.5 million in assistance to help southeast Asian nations, including Vietnam and the Philippines, protect their territorial waters amid rising tensions with China in the South China Sea. Vietnam has been involved in major trade negotiations with the United States as part of the Trans-Pacific Partnership. The US has encouraged the Philippines to join in. Washington has also backed a decade-long Philippine campaign against al-Qaida-linked local militants. On Wednesday, Kerry will visit Tacloban, which was hardest hit by last month's deadly Typhoon Haiyan. The U.S. was a major contributor of relief after the disaster.

16 die in clash in restive western China

BEIJING (AP)—A clash between knife-wielding assailants and police officers in China's restive Xinjiang region left 16 people dead, including two police, state media said Monday. The region's official news portal, Tianshan Net, said "several thugs" threw explosives Sunday night at the officers, who were pursuing unidentified suspects, and attacked them with knives. Two of the officers in Kashgar prefecture's Sayibage township were killed and police fatally shot 14 assailants, the report said. Two other suspected assailants were arrested, it said. No further details were provided.

China paper says US ship harassed China fleet

BEIJING (AP)—An official Chinese newspaper on Monday accused the U.S. Navy of harassing a Chinese squadron earlier this month, shortly before a near collision that marked the two nations' most serious sea confrontation in years. There has been no direct comment from China's Foreign Ministry or defense officials on the Dec. 5 incident in the South China Sea, where the USS Cowpens was operating in international waters. The U.S. ship, a 10,000-ton Ticonderoga-class cruiser, maneuvered to avoid the collision, the U.S. Pacific Fleet has said. Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Hua Chunying referred questions to the Defense Ministry, but insisted China "always respects and observes international laws and the freedoms of normal navigation and overflight."

Protests, prayers mark one year since Delhi rape

NEW DELHI (AP)—Students, Bollywood actresses and women's groups held rallies and candlelight vigils across India on Monday in memory of a young woman whose fatal gang rape on a moving bus one year ago shook the nation's conscience. The victim, a 23-year-old student, was heading home with a male friend after watching the movie "Life of Pi" when six men lured them onto a private bus. They beat the man with a metal bar, raped the woman and used the bar to inflict massive internal injuries. The two were dumped naked on the roadside, and the woman died two weeks later. Protesters and politicians at a public meeting in New Delhi spoke of changes in social attitudes, tough new laws and police reform adopted after the massive street protests that followed the gang rape.

World

Wave of attacks kill 65 people in Iraq

BAGHDAD (AP)—A double car bombing and a shooting killed 34 Shiite Muslims on pilgrimage in Iraq on Monday, the deadliest in a wave of attacks across the country that left at least 65 dead. It was the bloodiest day of violence in nearly two months.

Police officials said the worst attack took place Monday night in the southern Baghdad suburb of al-Rasheed, when two car bombs struck a group of Shiite pilgrims walking to the holy Shiite city of Karbala, killing 23 and wounding 55.

Hundreds of thousands of Shiite pilgrims are making their way to the city to commemorate Arbreen, the end of 40 days of mourning following the anniversary of the death of the Prophet Muhammad's grandson, Imam Hussein, a revered Shiite figure.

Earlier in the day, gunmen opened fire on a bus in Mosul that was carrying Shiite pilgrims traveling also to Karbala, killing 11 and wounding eight. Mosul is located about 360 kilometers (225 miles) north-

west of Baghdad.

Sunni Muslim insurgents in Iraq frequently attack Shiites, who they consider infidels. Usually, Shiite marches to holy cities are poorly protected by Iraqi security forces.

In other violence on Monday, a group of suicide bombers launched a brazen attack on

a police station in the town of Beiji, a former insurgent stronghold 250 kilometers (155 miles) north of Baghdad, where a suicide bomber rammed his explosives-laden car into the main gate of the town police station.

That explosion paved the way for three other suicide bombers who were on foot to storm in-

side and blow themselves up in the building, a police officer said. Eight policemen, including an officer, were killed while five were wounded in the attack, he said.

Later in the morning, several bombings hit different parts of Baghdad and northern Iraq, police said.

In southeastern Baghdad, a

parked car bomb ripped through a parking lot, killing six civilians and wounding 12.

Another parked car bomb went off in the central Sahlia neighborhood near the heavily fortified Green Zone where key government offices and foreign embassies are located. That attack killed five civilians and wounded 14.

Moscow: Missiles in western Russia legit

MOSCOW (AP)—Lithuania and Poland expressed concern on Monday about signals that Russia has deployed state-of-the-art missiles in a territory that borders the NATO countries.

The U.S. State Department also said that it has urged Russia to avoid taking any steps that could destabilize that region.

Russia's Defense Ministry gave an oblique response Monday to a report in the German daily Bild claiming that Russia has sent the Iskander short-range missiles to its westernmost Kaliningrad exclave on the Baltic Sea. The ministry said the missiles had been positioned in an unspecified location in western Russia, and argued that the deployment doesn't contradict any international treaties.

While the ministry was coy about the exact location of the missiles, the Kremlin-friendly daily Izvestia, which reportedly has close links to Russian security agencies, said the missiles had been deployed more than a year ago.

Asked about the reported missile deployment, U.S. State Department deputy spokeswoman Marie Harf said Washington has "shared with Russia the concerns that countries in the neighborhood have ... regarding Russia's deployment of the Iskander missiles in Kaliningrad."

"We've urged Moscow to take no steps to destabilize the region," she said. "We've made that point with them."

If true, the reports about the Iskander deployment to Kaliningrad would come as no surprise.

President Vladimir Putin and other Russian officials have talked about such a move for years, casting it as a necessary counterbalance to the development of the U.S.-led NATO missile defense for Europe. Moscow sees the missile shield as a threat to its nuclear deterrent.

While the deployment of the Iskander missiles would have little impact on the military balance between Russia and NATO, it could further damage Russia's ties with the

Missile threat?

Reports say Russia has deployed short-range missiles in its western Kaliningrad territory that borders NATO countries.

Iskander (SS-26)

Length 23 ft. (7 m)

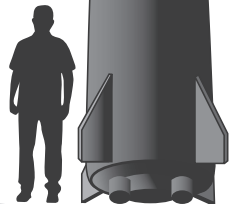
Diameter 35.4 in. (0.9 m)

Range Up to 300 mi. (500 km)

Launch 2 missiles from an 8x8 military vehicle

Warhead 1,058 lb. (480 kg) conventional

Travels at hypersonic speeds; difficult to intercept



Source: Federation of American Scientists, AP, ESRI © 2013 MCT

West, which already have been strained by disputes over the U.S. missile shield, Russia's human rights record and, most recently, Ukraine.

"I am worried about signals that Russia is about to modernize missile systems it has deployed in Kaliningrad," Lithuanian Defense Minister Juozas Olekas told reporters. "Further militarization of this region, bordering the Baltic states and NATO creates further anxiety, and we will be watching situation there closely."



An Iraqi man inspects a minibus damaged in a car bomb attack in Baghdad, Iraq, Monday, Dec. 16, 2013.

UN: \$12.9 billion aid needed in 2014

GENEVA (AP)—The United Nations said Monday it will need nearly \$13 billion in aid in 2014 to reach at least 52 million people in 17 countries, including the millions of Syrians who have been displaced by their civil war.

"This is the largest amount we've ever had to request at the start of the year," said Valerie Amos, the U.N.'s humanitar-

ian chief. "The complexity and scale of what we are doing is rising all the time."

The aid is to be provided by 500 organizations, including the main U.N. agencies for food, refugees and children.

About half of the requested \$12.9 billion in aid—some \$6.5 billion—would go toward delivering food, shelter and health care in Syria and neighboring

countries affected by the war.

"This is the largest ever appeal for a single crisis," Amos said.

In Syria, there are 2.5 million people in "hard to reach communities" because of fighting and security concerns, she said.

The nearly 3-year-old conflict has claimed more than 100,000 lives and displaced millions, and even if it ends tomorrow

the humanitarian aid would still need to continue, Amos said.

"We're facing a terrifying situation here where, by the end of 2014, substantially more of the population of Syria could be displaced or in need of humanitarian help than not," said the U.N.'s High Commissioner for Refugees António Guterres.

"This goes beyond anything we have seen in many, many years, and makes the need for a political solution all the much greater," he said.

Fake signer at Mandela event accused in mob attack

JOHANNESBURG (AP)—Just when it seemed the scandal over the bogus sign language interpreter at Nelson Mandela's memorial had run its course, a cousin and three friends say he was part of a mob that accosted two men found with a stolen television and burned them to death by setting fire to tires placed around their necks.

Thamsanqa Jantjie never went to trial for the 2003 killings when other suspects did because authorities determined he was not mentally fit to stand trial, the four told The Associated Press Monday. They spoke on

condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the fake signing fiasco, which has deeply embarrassed South Africa's government and prompted a high-level investigation into how it happened.

Their account of the killings matched a description of the crime and the outcome for Jantjie that he himself described in an interview published by the Sunday Times newspaper of Johannesburg.

"It was a community thing,

what you call mob justice, and I was also there," Jantjie told the newspaper.



Jantjie

Jantjie was not at his house Monday, and the cousin told AP Jantjie had been picked up by someone in a car Sunday and had not returned. His cell-phone rang through to a message saying Jantjie was not reachable.

Instead of standing trial in 2006, Jantjie was institutionalized for a period of longer than a year, the four said, and then re-

turned to live in his poor township neighborhood on the outskirts of Soweto. At some point after that, they said, he started getting jobs doing sign language interpretation at events for the governing African National Congress party.

Jantjie told the AP that he has schizophrenia, hallucinated and believed he saw angels while gesturing incoherently just 3 feet away from President Barack Obama and other world leaders at the memorial on Tuesday. Signing experts said his arm and hand movements were mere gibberish.

Focus

Survey says 1 in 5 in US become rich

WASHINGTON (AP)—Fully 20 percent of U.S. adults become rich for parts of their lives, wielding extensive influence over America's economy and politics, according to new survey data.

These "new rich," made up largely of older professionals, working married couples and more educated singles, are becoming politically influential, and economists say their capacity to spend is key to the U.S. economic recovery. But their rise is also a sign of the nation's continuing economic polarization.

They extend well beyond the wealthiest 1 percent, a traditional group of super-rich millionaires and billionaires with long-held family assets. The new rich have household income of \$250,000 or more at some point during their working lives, putting them—if sometimes temporarily—in the top 2 percent of earners.

The new survey data on the affluent are being published in an upcoming book, and an analysis by The AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research provided additional information on the views of the group.

In a country where poverty is at a record high, today's new rich are notable for their sense of economic fragility. They rely on income from their work to maintain their social position and pay for things such as private tutoring for their children. That makes them much more fiscally conservative than other Americans, polling suggests, and less likely to support public programs, such as food stamps or early public education, to help the disadvantaged.

Last week, President Barack Obama asserted that growing inequality is "the defining challenge of our time," signaling that it will be a major theme for Democrats in next year's elections.

"In this country, you don't get any-

where without working hard," said James Lott, 28, a pharmacist in Renton, Wash., who adds to his six-figure salary by day-trading stocks. The son of Nigerian immigrants, Lott says he was able to get ahead by earning an advanced pharmacy degree. He makes nearly \$200,000 a year.

After growing up on food stamps, Lott now splurges occasionally on nicer restaurants, Hugo Boss shoes and extended vacations to New Orleans, Atlanta and parts of Latin America. He believes government should play a role in helping the disadvantaged. But he says the poor should be encouraged to support themselves, explaining that his single mother rose out of hardship by starting a day-care business in their home.

The new research suggests that affluent Americans are more numerous than government data depict, encompassing 21 percent of working-age adults for at least a year by the time they turn 60. That proportion has more than doubled since 1979.

Even outside periods of unusual wealth, members of this group generally hover in the \$100,000-plus income range, keeping them in the top 20 percent of earners.

At the same time, an increasing polarization of low-wage work and high-skill jobs has left middle-income careers depleted.

"For many in this group, the American dream is not dead. They have reached affluence for parts of their lives and see it as very attainable, even if the dream has become more elusive for everyone else," says Mark Rank, a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, who calculated numbers on the affluent for a forthcoming book, "Chasing the American Dream," to be published by the Oxford University Press.

As the fastest-growing group based on take-home pay, the new rich tend to enjoy better schools, employment and gated communities, making it easier to pass on their privilege to their children.

Because their rising status comes at a time when upward mobility in the U.S. ranks lowest among wealthy industrialized countries, the spending attitudes of the new rich have implications for politics and policy. It's now become even harder for people at the bottom to move up.

The group is more liberal than lower-income groups on issues such as abortion and gay marriage, according to an analysis of General Social Survey data by the AP-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. But when it comes to money, their views aren't so open. They're wary of any government role in closing the income gap.

In Gallup polling in October, 60 percent of people making \$90,000 or more said average Americans already had "plenty of opportunity" to get ahead. Among those making less than \$48,000, the share was 48 percent

■ ■ ■ ■

Sometimes referred to by marketers as the "mass affluent," the new rich make up roughly 25 million U.S. households and account for nearly 40 percent of total U.S. consumer spending.

While paychecks shrank for most Americans after the 2007-2009 recession, theirs held steady or edged higher. In 2012, the top 20 percent of U.S. households took home a record 51 percent of the nation's income. The median income of this group is more than \$150,000.

Once concentrated in the old-money enclaves of the Northeast, the new rich are now spread across the U.S., mostly in bigger cities and their suburbs. They

include Washington, D.C.; Boston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Seattle. By race, whites are three times more likely to reach affluence than nonwhites.

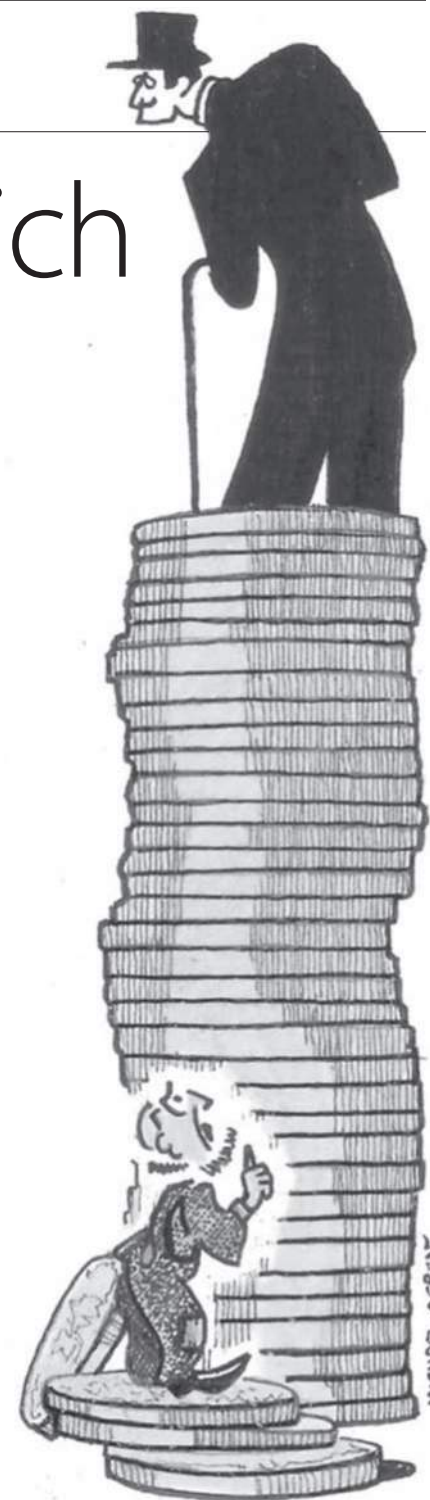
Paul F. Nunes, managing director at Accenture's Institute for High Performance and Research, calls this group "the new power brokers of consumption." Because they spend just 60 percent of their before-tax income, often setting the rest aside for retirement or investing, he says their capacity to spend more will be important to a U.S. economic recovery.

In Miami, developers are betting on a growing luxury market, building higher-end malls featuring Cartier, Armani and Louis Vuitton and hoping to expand on South Florida's Bal Harbour, a favored hideaway of the rich.

"It's not that I don't have money. It's more like I don't have time," said Deborah Sponder, 57, walking her dog Ava recently along Miami's blossoming Design District. She was headed to one of her two art galleries—this one between the Emilio Pucci and Cartier stores and close to the Louis Vuitton and Hermes storefronts.

But Sponder says she doesn't consider her income of \$250,000 as upper class, noting that she is paying college tuition for her three children. "Between rent, schooling and everything—it comes in and goes out."

The new rich's influence will only grow as middle-class families below them struggle. The Federal Reserve said Monday that the nation's wealth rose 2.6 percent from July through September to \$77.3 trillion, a record high, boosted in part by a surging stock market. But the gains haven't been equally distributed; the wealthiest 10 percent of U.S. households own about 80 percent of stocks.



■ ■ ■ ■

Both Democrats and Republicans are awakening to the political realities presented by this new demographic bubble.

Traditionally Republican, the group makes up more than 1 in 4 voters and is now more politically divided, better educated and less white and male than in the past, according to Election Day exit polls dating to the 1970s.

Sixty-nine percent of upper-income voters backed Republican Ronald Reagan and his supply-side economics of tax cuts in 1984. By 2008, Democrat Barack Obama had split their vote evenly, 49-49.

In 2012, Obama lost the group, with 54 percent backing Republican Mitt Romney.

"For the Democrats' part, traditional economic populism is poorly suited for affluent professionals," says Alan Abramowitz, an Emory University professor who specializes in political polarization.

The new rich includes Robert Kane, 39, of Colorado Springs, Colo.

A former stockbroker who once owned three houses and voted steadfastly Republican, Kane says he was humbled after the 2008 financial meltdown, which he says exposed Wall Street's excesses. Now a senior vice president for a private equity firm specializing in the marijuana business, Kane says he's concerned about upward mobility for the poor and calls wealthy politicians such as Romney "out of touch."

But Kane, now a registered independent, draws the line when it comes to higher taxes. "A dollar is best in your hand rather than the government's," he says.



AP

This photo taken Nov. 21, 2013 shows James Lott outside the Wal-Mart store where he works as a pharmacist in Bonney Lake, Wash. Lott, who lives in Renton, Wash., a suburb of Seattle, adds significantly to his six-figure job salary by day-trading stocks.

Campus Life



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photo shows the K2 Division contingent of the Golden Harvest International School to the Primary Grade Forensic Competition on Nov. 23, 2013, at Grace Christian Academy.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Photo shows the 3-5 Division contingent of the Golden Harvest International School to the Primary Grade Forensic Competition on Nov. 23, 2013, at Grace Christian Academy.

Golden Harvest Int'l School wins major awards at PGFC

Golden Harvest International School proudly announced that their students brought home major awards at the recent Primary Grade Forensic Competition held on Nov. 23, 2013, at Grace Christian Academy.

"It was a remarkable act of teamwork, hard work and prayers coming from the teachers, parents and students," said principal Marilyn Divino. "I thank all our parents and teachers for their untiring support to GHIS."

Congratulations to all the winners. Keep up the good work!

K2 DIVISION

CHORAL SPEAKING:

1st place (K5): Kristel Andrea Lubi, Maria Corazon Batalones, Dream Jayna Mariano,

Julie Anne Chavez

2nd place (1st Grade): Mia Ysabela Abuan, Tamia Lei Hix, Breana Ysabel Patawaran, Nicole Erin Mariano, and Andrei Kaithlyn Chavez

3rd place (K5): Jerick Russell Bernabe, Anthony Christian Rivera, Quince Emanuele Tizon, David Chistian Salinas

4th place (2nd Grade): Akysha Eunice Castro, Ivan Yuri Ferrera, Jesse Jack Stole, Mark Jainier Chavez

DUO CATEGORY

2nd place (1st Grade): Mia Ysabela Abuan and Breana Ysabel Patawaran

3rd place (K5): Kristel Andrea Lubi and Anthony Christian Rivera

4th place (1st Grade): Sohgo Honda and Crispin Joseph Eliseo Saures

DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION

2nd place (K5): Jerick Russell Bernabe

HUMUROUS INTERPRETATION

4th place (1st Grade): Nicole Erin Mariano

5th place (K5): Quinn Thomas Palacios

RF-CHAMORRO CATEGORY

1st place (2nd Grade): Jesse Jack Stole

3-5 DIVISION

RF- CHAMORRO CATEGORY

1st place (4th Grade): Michelle Leon Guerrero

DUO CATEGORY

1st place (5th Grade): Vince Philip Salvador and John Isaac San Nicolas

2nd place (3rd Grade): Christine Joyce Caluya and Tyana Cristine Hix

CHORAL SPEAKING CATEGORY

4th place (3rd Grade): Christine Joyce Caluya, John Paul Labadan, Tyana Cristine Hix, and Amber Sydney Sureta

5th place (4th & 5th Grade): Sebastian Dearlord Bernardo, Aaron Ignacio, Raesyl Gerard Solis, Vince Philip Salvador, John Isaac San Nicolas

Palau college and Fiji university collaborate on nursing program

Palau Community College held an opening ceremony on Oct. 31, 2013, for the Fiji National University's Public Health Nursing Program. Present at the ceremony were the prospective nursing students, PCC president Dr. Patrick U. Tellei, PCC nursing instructor Illoi Rabuka, Pacific Islands Health Officers' Association member Dr. Gregory Dever, and the retired nurses of Palau.

The ceremony began with a spiritual moment followed by a brief introduction about the program provided by Rabuka. She was followed by a special address given by Tellei, who emphasized the importance of the program, especially for islands with medical forces dwindling in numbers. Dever, who spoke on behalf of the PIHOA and Palau's Ministry of Health, shared how the nursing program

was enticing interest around the Pacific region. This interest was prompting other learning institutes across the region to consider similar collaborations.

The bachelor's degree for Public Health Nursing Program is a result of collaborated efforts between Palau Community College, Palau's Ministry of Health, and the Fiji National University.

Palau Community College agreed to host the program in Palau by providing the facilities. Fiji National University will be the main source of learning material and information. Through both learning institutes, the nurses currently working in Palau may pursue a bachelor's degree without having to attend an off-island institution. Interested nurses must have an associate degree in nursing in order to participate in the program. (PCC)

In Memory of

Toshinori Chinen

July 24, 1935 – December 10, 2013



Memorial Services will be held at
Seventh Day Adventist Center
on Wednesday, December 18,
2013, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm.
His remains will be flown
to Okinawa, Japan
on Thursday morning,
December 19, 2013.

**Emerenciana D. Chinen
and family**

Life & Style

Beyonce sells 617,000 albums in 3 days on iTunes

NEW YORK (AP)—Beyonce's surprise album has sold surprisingly well: Her fifth solo effort sold more than 600,000 units in its first three days, setting a record for first-week domestic digital sales.

Beyonce's self-titled album was released early Friday morn-

ing exclusively on iTunes unbeknownst to the public. Apple said Monday that the album sold 617,213 in its U.S. iTunes Store. It sold 828,773 internationally.

"You have to be innovative. The Internet has changed the game. You've got to look at

how to address the fact that most artists' albums leak before their release plans," said Lee Anne Callahan-Longo, the general manager of Beyonce's production company Parkwood Entertainment, who released the album alongside Columbia Records.

"Look at where your opportunities can lie and that's kind of how we approached it," she continued in an interview Monday. "We had a multitude of things we were trying to accomplish, some things we were trying to avoid, and this turned out to be the right perfect plan for us."

Beyonce surprised fans with the release of the album, which features 14 songs and 17 videos, and social media website exploded with mentions of the singer and her new music. In three hours, it sold 80,000 units, and the build-up continued over the weekend.

"It really wasn't about making a hit record or chasing what sounds like today's music for singles," explained Callahan-

Longo, who has worked with Beyonce for seven years.

"Beyonce" features collaborations with Jay Z, Drake, Frank Ocean and Justin Timberlake, who co-wrote two songs. The album is being sold by iTunes exclusively for a week at \$15.99. It will be sold in retailers and others websites this week.

"It wasn't easy and we were really careful," Callahan-Longo said of keeping the album a secret. "It started with a very small core group of people and only grew when necessary in order to make something happen. It got a little dicey there and concerning as we got closer and closer as the circle had to widen."

"Beyonce" broke the first-week digital sales record for

an album in the United States. It also marks the singer's best first-week numbers. It will debut at No. 1 on Billboard's Top 200 albums chart this week.

Callahan-Longo said the Jay Z-featured "Drunk In Love" and "XO," co-produced by Ryan Tedder, will be launched as singles. She said Beyonce came up with the idea to launch a "visual album."

"She said to me one day, 'I really want to do a visual album. I want to do all the videos and I want to put them out.' I looked at her and I said, 'Whoa, wow, oh my God,'" she recalled. "We all said to her, 'Wow, you're crazy, but OK, let's think about that.' And we really kind of sat down and figured out how could this actually happen."



This May 6, 2013 file photo shows singer Beyonce at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute benefit in New York.

AP

Yearwood, McBride cancel SeaWorld concerts

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—More entertainers have canceled their appearances at SeaWorld Orlando following the recent release of a documentary that raises questions about the effects of captivity on whales.

Representatives for Trisha Yearwood and Martina McBride confirmed Monday that the country singers have joined the ranks of recording artists who have pulled out of performing at the park's February concert series, Bands, Brew and BBQ.

A SeaWorld spokesman also confirmed that 38 Special had pulled out of their scheduled concert at the marine park.

They joined Barenaked Ladies, Willie Nelson and Heart in canceling their appearances.

The documentary, "Blackfish," explores what may have caused a 12,000-pound orca named Tilikum to kill veteran SeaWorld trainer Dawn Brancheau in 2010. Tilikum pulled her into a pool. The orca was also involved in two other deaths.

SeaWorld spokesman Nick

Gollattscheck said in an email that SeaWorld officials respected the performers' decisions but were disappointed. He said other bands have been booked to replace those who have dropped out, and the new lineup will be announced once all the recording artists have confirmed their appearances.

Many of the performers canceled after fans launched a petition campaign on the website Change.org. Gollattscheck said SeaWorld officials expect more performers to be targeted in similar campaigns.

Romance writer Janet Dailey dies at 69

BRANSON, Missouri (AP)—Romance writer Janet Dailey, whose books have sold more than 325 million copies worldwide, has died at her southwest Missouri home. She was 69.

Snapp-Bearden Funeral Home in Branson said Dailey died Saturday in the music resort town. A coroner had not released the cause of death as of Monday, and the funeral home reported that the family said only that Dailey died "peacefully."

Born and raised in Iowa, Dailey moved to Branson in 1978 with her husband, Bill Dailey, who was credited with

helping build the town into an entertainment mecca.

Dailey's novels included the popular "Calder" series and her Americana series—50 books, one set in each state. Her website lists 155 works, including single novels and short story collections as well as the two series.

A perennial fixture on best-seller lists, Dailey saw her books translated into 19 languages. Her latest, "Merry Christmas, Cowboy," ranked 13th on Publishers Weekly's adult mass market best-seller list in early October.

Dailey's career hit a rough

spot in 1997 when she was sued for copyright infringement by another best-selling author, Nora Roberts. Dailey admitted that two of her novels—1991's "Aspen Gold" and 1996's "Notorious"—contained ideas and passages borrowed from Roberts' works.

Dailey apologized in 1997, saying the plagiarism occurred when her husband was undergoing cancer surgery and she was under immense stress. The lawsuit was settled out of court in 1998 for an undisclosed sum.

Bill Dailey had been treated for pancreatic cancer and died in 2005 at the age of 76.

Chris Brown's probation revoked over DC arrest

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A judge on Monday revoked Chris Brown's probation after his recent arrest on suspicion of misdemeanor assault in Washington, D.C., but the ruling will not alter the singer's requirements to complete rehab and community labor for his 2009 attack on Rihanna.

Superior Court Judge James R. Brandlin cited details contained in an arrest report as his reason for revoking Brown's probation for the second time this year. He ordered Brown to return to court Feb. 10 for an update on his progress in rehab.

Prosecutors did not request that Brown be sent to jail during Monday's hearing.

In November, Brown was ordered to spend 90 days in a treatment program for anger management and other issues. Brandlin said probation officials reported the Grammy-winner was handling the program well in recent weeks.

"I'm pleased he's doing well" in treatment, the judge said.

Brandlin reviewed Brown's October arrest report filed after a man accused the R&B singer of hitting him outside the W Hotel in Washington. Brown and his bodyguard were initially charged with felony assault, but the case was reduced to a misdemeanor. Brown has been ordered to appear in a D.C. court on Jan. 8.

Brown's attorney Mark Geragos said he agreed with Brandlin's decision to revoke probation but not send his client to jail.

Brown's probation was revoked earlier this year over a misdemeanor hit-and-run in Los Angeles and concerns that he hadn't completed six months of community labor for his 2009 attack on Rihanna, who was his girlfriend at the time. Brandlin ordered the singer to perform an additional 1,000 hours, and Brown has so far completed 60, according to his probation report.

An official at Brown's rehab wrote in a letter included in the report that Brown is no longer

taking medical marijuana and with the aid of other medications is now able to better "emotionally regulate himself."

Brown voluntarily entered rehab after his Oct. 27 arrest but was forced to leave the program after he threw a rock through his mother's car window after a treatment session. Brandlin ordered the singer back into rehab last month.

He was ordered to serve five years of probation for his pre-Grammy attack on Rihanna in 2009. He has until August to complete his community labor sentence, which requires him to perform roadside cleanup, graffiti removal or other supervised manual labor.



AP

R&B singer Chris Brown, left, appears in court with his attorney Mark Geragos during a probation violation hearing in which his probation was revoked by a superior court judge on Monday, Dec. 16, 2013, in Los Angeles.

2 Ohio women held captive have book deal

NEW YORK (AP)—Two of the three Ohio women held captive for years in a Cleveland house have a book deal.

Viking announced Monday that it has acquired the planned book by Amanda Berry and Gina DeJesus. The book is currently untitled and is scheduled to come out in 2015.

Berry and DeJesus are working with Pulitzer Prize-winning Washington Post reporters Mary Jordan and Kevin Sullivan. Negotiations were handled by Washington attorney Robert Barnett, whose clients have ranged from President Barack Obama to Amanda Knox.

Berry, DeJesus and Michelle

Knight were rescued in May and their kidnapper, Ariel Castro, was arrested and eventually sentenced to life in prison. He was found hanged in his cell in September.

Knight is working on her own memoir, which Weinstein Books plans to publish next spring.

Dan Brown's 'Inferno' tops Amazon's list for 2013

NEW YORK (AP)—A year after "Fifty Shades of Grey" overwhelmed best-seller lists, book buyers were seeking different kinds of thrills.

Dan Brown's latest Robert Langdon caper, "Inferno," was Amazon.com's No. 1 seller for 2013, the online retailer announced Monday. Khaled Hosseini was second with "And the

Mountains Echoed." The best-sellers for kids and teens were Veronica Roth's "Allegiant" and Rick Riordan's "The Holes of Hades."

Other major hits on Amazon.com were "The Cuckoo's Calling," a crime story J.K. Rowling wrote under the pseudonym Robert Galbraith, and John

Grisham's "Sycamore Row." Sylvia Day's "Entwined With You" was one of the few works of erotic fiction to place high on Amazon's list. Nonfiction favorites included Sheryl Sandberg's "Lean In" and "Things That Matter," an anthology of essays by conservative columnist Charles Krauthammer.

Harry Styles wins court order against paparazzi

LONDON (AP)—A British High Court judge has ordered paparazzi to stay away from One Direction member Harry Styles.

The order from Justice Nicola Davies bars several photographers from pursuing the singer by car or motorcycle, placing him under surveillance and loitering or waiting within 50 meters (164 feet) of his home.

Styles' lawyer, David Sherborne, said the singer had gone

to court after failing to persuade the photographers to stop their behavior voluntarily.

Sherborne said 19-year-old Styles—one-fifth of the world's biggest boy band—"is not trying to prevent fans approaching him in the street and taking photos. He remains happy to do that, as he always has."

The court order was originally granted last week. On Monday the judge continued it until another hearing on Jan. 13.



AP
In this Thursday, Sept. 20, 2012 file photo Harry Styles, right, performs with his band One Direction as part of the iTunes Festival 2012, in London.

"12 Years," "Hustle" Critics' Choice Movie noms

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Steve McQueen's "12 Years a Slave" and David O. Russell's "American Hustle" lead the 19th annual Critics' Choice Movie Awards nominees with 13 bids each. Both films are nominated for best picture, actor, supporting actor and actress, acting ensemble, director, editing, costume design and makeup.

Alfonso Cuarón's space odyssey, "Gravity," starring Sandra Bullock, also tops the list

with 10 nominations, including best picture, actress, director and visual effects. Bullock was also nominated for her comedic performance in "The Heat."

"The Wolf of Wall Street," "Her," "Captain Phillips" and "Nebraska" received six bids each. "The Hobbit: The Desolation of Smaug" logged five.

The awards will be held on Jan. 16 in Santa Monica, California. The show will air live on the CW Network and will be hosted by Aisha Tyler.

Cowell: New judges, more change for 'X Factor'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Simon Cowell is plotting changes for "The X Factor," including new judges and a new role for him.

Cowell is the show's producer. He told a teleconference Monday that he expects the singing contest to return next season on Fox.

He says "X Factor" may be cut back to one night instead of two, and format changes are under discussion to keep it fresh.

Cowell says the judging

panel probably will be different. Besides Cowell, the "X Factor" judges include Demi Lovato, Kelly Rowland and Paulina Rubio.

Cowell says he has recruits in mind, but he declined to identify them. He says he envisions what he called a "different kind of role" for himself, but he wouldn't be more specific.

The show's ratings have dipped in season three. The winner will be announced on the finale Thursday.



Cowell

Husband on gender journey wants his wife to go along

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



DEAR ABBY: A couple of years ago, my husband informed me that he likes to dress in women's clothing. Since then he has read books, is seeing a counselor, and the reality is, he is transgender. He now wears his hair long and has long fingernails.

I have tried to be understanding and have gone places with him when he is dressed as a woman. He has met other transgender people who have either made the full transition or are content without it. I allow my husband time with these new friends without me. I did feel weird that he was clothes shopping and going to movies with his new friends.

I have reconciled with these activities and I'm OK with them so far. But I have told him that if he decides to change his gender to female, I will not be able to be married to him. He's on hormones at the moment and has told me he plans to start testosterone blockers.

I love him, Abby, but NOT the woman side of him. Am I unreasonable to put a boundary on my marriage? He thinks if he slowly eases me into the idea that it will be OK. He says I am his "world" and I should love him no matter what gender he is. Am I being selfish?

SOMEWHERE IN THE NORTHWEST

DEAR SOMEWHERE: You appear to be a loving and accepting wife. You may be your husband's world, but his world is changing—and along with it, so is yours. It is not selfish to take care of yourself. You did not enter your marriage to be partnered with another woman, and you should not be made to feel guilty remaining with one if it's not what you want. Some spouses stay together; others just can't.

If you haven't heard of the Straight Spouse Network, it is a confidential support network of current or former heterosexual spouses or partners of gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender mates. It was founded in 1991, and its mission is to help straight spouses or partners cope with coming-out issues, and help mixed-orientation couples and their children build bridges of understanding. To learn more about it and find a support group near you, visit www.straightspouse.org.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have always had an extremely close relationship with my little sister. Last year, I graduated from high school and left for university. It was hard for both of us. My college is an hour away from where my family lives, so even though I live on campus, I try to come home whenever I can to visit on weekends.

Lately it seems like my little sister has emotionally distanced herself from me. She doesn't confide in me anymore, shows little interest in my life, and it has gotten to the point where she barely acknowledges me in public. I have tried talking to her about it and telling her how much it hurts me, but she tells me I'm overreacting and to stop being stupid.

My mom says she does this with everyone and that this is typical for a 14-year-old teenager, but it breaks my heart to be so excluded from her life. Is this just a phase I have to learn to deal with and accept? What should I do?

SAD BIG SISTER IN SWITZERLAND

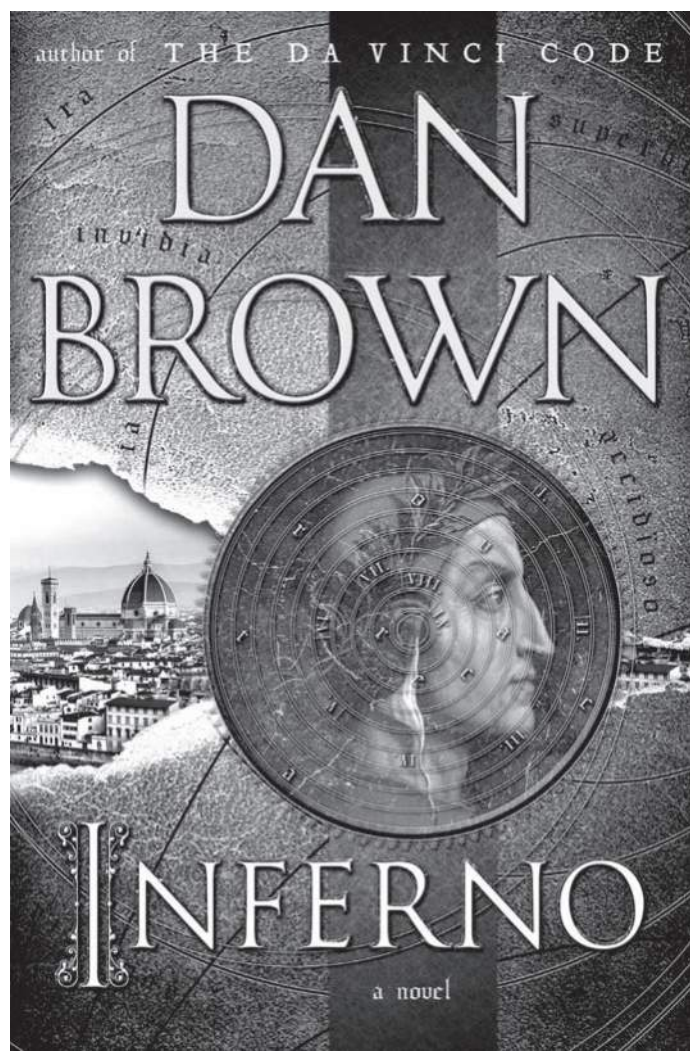
DEAR BIG SISTER: Your sister is growing up, and part of that process means becoming an individual. Right now she is trying to figure out who she is, apart from the family she loves—including you. I'm sure she isn't intentionally trying to hurt your feelings. Because you were so close, she may have felt abandoned when you left for college. Your mother is right about this. Let your sister evolve. She'll be back. Accept it for now.

■■■

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

■■■

Good advice for everyone—teens to seniors—is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$7 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)



AP
This file book cover image released by Doubleday shows "Inferno," by Dan Brown.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Timberlake, Beyonce have year's top iTunes albums

Beyoncé's new album was just released last week, but it's the second best-selling album on iTunes this year. Apple announced Tuesday that the diva's self-titled album is only behind Justin Timberlake's "The 20/20 Experience." Beyoncé's fifth album sold more than 617,000 units in three days. Albums from Imagine Dragons, Jay Z and Drake round out the top 5. Macklemore & Ryan Lewis have the top-selling song with "Thrift Shop." Their hit, "Can't Hold Us," placed fifth. Robin Thicke's "Blurred Lines," "Radioactive" by Imagine Dragons and Pink's "Just Give Me a Reason" ranked second, third and fourth, respectively. "Skyfall" is the year's top-selling movie and "Breaking Bad" is the leading TV show. (AP)

TV Hall of Fame to add Louis-Dreyfus, Leno

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The Television Academy is adding six new members to its Hall of Fame, including former "Seinfeld" star Julia Louis-Dreyfus and Jay Leno. The academy's Hall of Fame selection committee announced the list of inductees for 2014 on Monday. Louis-Dreyfus is a four-time Emmy Award winner and Leno is known as the host of the "To-

night Show." They'll be joined by media magnate Rupert Murdoch, writer-producer David E. Kelley and network executive Brandon Stoddard. Sound pioneer Ray Dolby will be inducted posthumously. The new Hall of Fame members will be honored at a Beverly Hills ceremony in March. Past honorees include Lucille Ball, Walt Disney, Bob Hope and Bill Cosby.

Michael Jordan's Chicago-area home up for auction

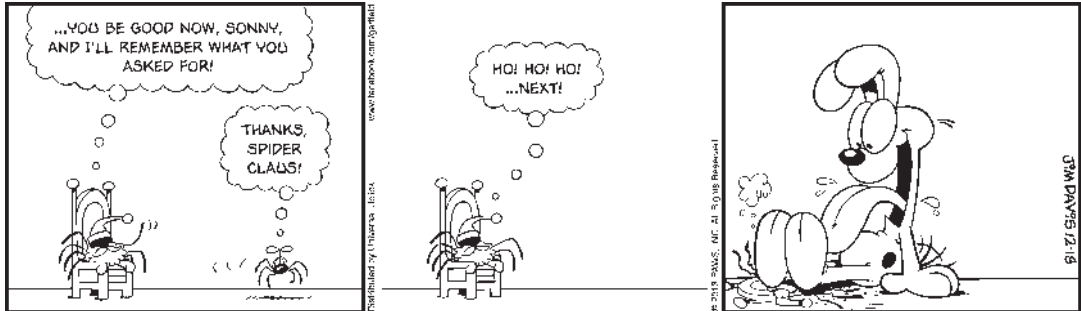
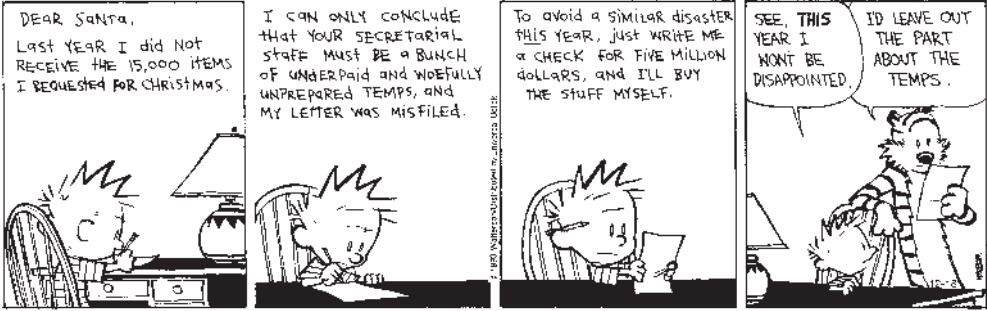
HIGHLAND PARK, Ill. (AP)—Michael Jordan's 56,000-square foot (17,068-meter) home in suburban Chicago is up for auction. Concierge Auctions says the sale will take place Monday. The company runs the sales of high-end real estate and features Jordan's Highland Park home north of Chicago on its website. The former Chicago Bulls star's home has nine bedrooms, 15 full bathrooms, a pool pavilion and a regulation-size indoor basketball court. It also features what's been described as a "gentleman's retreat" complete with a library, full wet bar and the original doors from the Playboy Mansion in Chicago. It all sits on more than seven acres (2.8 hectares) of land. Jordan's home was originally listed at \$29 million in early 2012. Jordan now owns the Charlotte Bobcats.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

Garfield® By Jim Davis



Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

The Duplex By Glenn McCoy



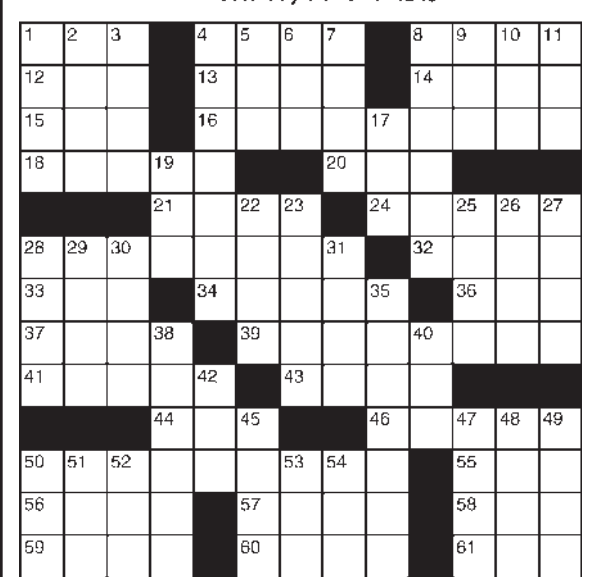
CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 39 Distin- guished ancestry 41 Detox center 43 Tradi- tional tales 44 Expert birthstone 46 Chew the scenery 50 Re children's health 55 Meadow 56 Related 57 Small pie 58 — and outs 59 Safe- cracker 60 Change for a five 61 Praiseful verse

DOWN 1 Above 2 Angler's catch 3 Counte- nance 4 Highest 5 Gorilla 6 Cushion 7 No 8 Whiten- ing agent 9 Dine 10 First lady 11 Distant 17 Cattle call 19 Work with 22 NCAA's Miners 23 Bouton- niere site 25 Get wind of 47 Hodge- podge 48 See to 49 Relaxa- tion 50 Salary 51 Scratch (out) 52 Use a trowel 53 Took off 54 Rage

Solution time: 21 mins.

Yesterday's answer 12-18



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY:

Christina Aguilera, 33; Katie Holmes, 35; Brad Pitt, 50; Steven Spielberg, 67.

Happy Birthday: Your personal and profes- sional lives will clash. Sensitivity must not inter- fere with what needs to be done. Taking action will be needed, but also must be done with great thought. Backtracking and trying to fix unneces- sary mistakes will hold you back. Discipline will help you achieve, but impulse will set you back. Keep your ego well-hidden to avoid criticism. Your numbers are 4, 9, 19, 26, 28, 37, 45.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Do some- thing nice for someone going through a tough time. Taking a stance and speaking up about your beliefs, theories and concerns will put you in the limelight and create a stir in your community or amongst your friends. **

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Make trav- el plans or visit friends or relatives you don't get to see often. Talk over changes you want to make within an important relation- ship. Firm up on any agreement you have regard- ing legal or contractual connotations. ****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Keep your secrets locked up tight. An impulsive move due to an emotional situation will leave you in a questionable position. Prepare to make a decision that will alter who you spend time with between now and the end of the year. ***

CANCER (June 21-July 22): A little rest will do you good. Continually trying to make everything perfect for others will take its toll on you emotionally, mentally and

physically. Consider booking a massage or a day at the spa. Romance will ease stress. ***

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Do what's ex- pected of you and keep moving. Hook up with friends or shop for special items that will make your life easier or more comfortable. Don't rely on others when it's up to you to make things happen. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Don't jump to conclusions or make a hasty move. Focus on getting things done and spending time with the people you love the most. Picking up a new outfit or updating your look will help boost your confidence. ****

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Emotional problems will surface if you are dealing with children or anyone that depends on you. Look for answers that will help im- prove the dynamic of any relationship you feel is worthwhile. Avoid excess and improve your health. **

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Do some- thing unique if you plan to entertain and make an impression on your guests. A change to the way you live will enhance your life and give you plenty to look forward to. Romance will pay off. *****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Make changes at home that will brighten your environment. More activity will motivate you to expand your interests. Consider how you want to ring in the New Year and make plans that include the people you enjoy being around the most. ***

EUGENIA LAST THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Lis- ten to what's being said, but don't take offense. Everyone is entitled to his or her opinion. Anger is a waste of time and construc- tive criticism, although not favored, can be of help in the not-too-distant future. ***

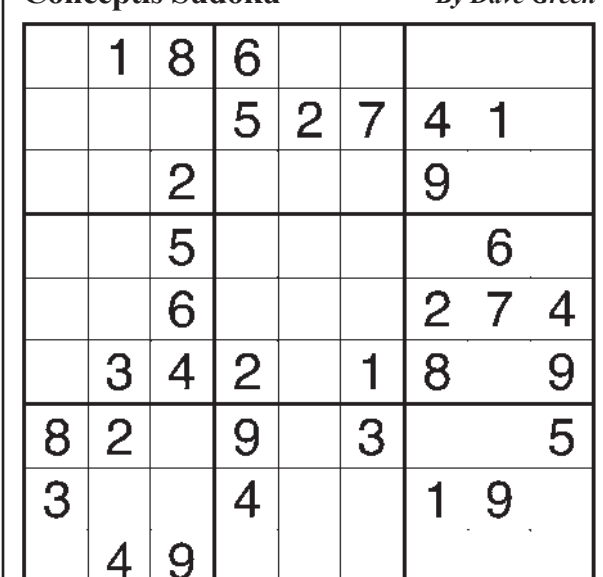
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Surround yourself with people who inspire you. Once you get started in a direction that allows you to utilize the things you do best, you will be unstoppable. A change of plans will end up being to your benefit. Enjoy the moment. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Go out and hustle to get all the little things done that have been nagging at you. A chance to spend time with someone you love to be around should be planned for the evening hours. A com- mitment can and should be made. *****

Birthday Baby: You are goal-oriented and play- ful. You like to be in control.

Eugenia's website—eugenialast.com, Eugenia's android app @ <http://bit.ly/exhoro> and join Eu- genia on [twitter/facebook/linkedin](https://twitter.com/eugenialast).

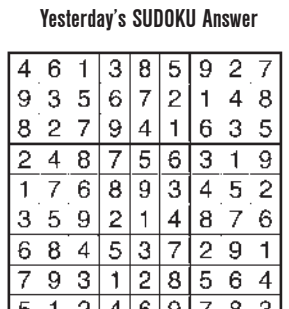
SUDOKU Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green



Difficulty Level ★★★ 12/18

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.



WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizon- tally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

'BREAKING BAD' Solution: 8 letters

Q M O R A M A R D D O T P E E
U A A R O N A E D E D S I N T
E A G R A N S T O N K E N A E
S C H R A D E R A R C I K J P
T N E I T A P R I N E R M A N
C A M P E R B K E T H E A C E
Y L I M A F N I I E R S N K V
E U S L N E C H N A M U A N E
S A T A D S W N O C A S G A T
T P Y O I A U M R H N P I H S
E R B S L G A E R E T E L E K
B O I T A R I C I R R N L S Y
B R E N I U T N S Y A S I S L
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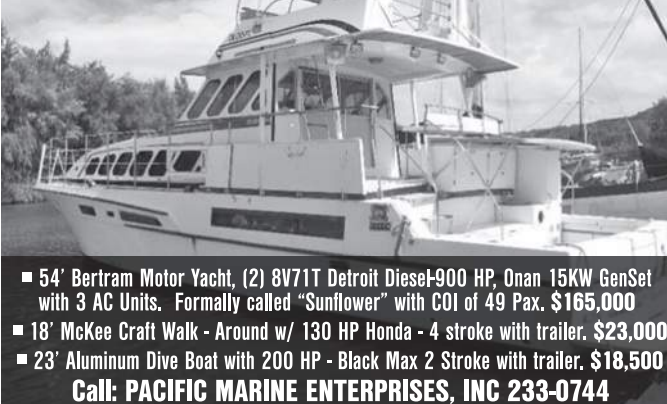
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Pistons hand Pacers first home defeat, 101-96



INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Detroit beat Indiana at its own game Monday night.

The Pistons were tougher inside, tougher on defense and tougher at fending off challenges.

On a night the Eastern Conference's best team looked like anything but, Josh Smith scored 30 points and Greg Monroe had 13 points and 12 rebounds to help Detroit send Indiana to a 101-96 loss—the Pacers' first at home this season.

"It's impressive the way we came in and competed with the way the Pacers have been playing," Pistons coach Maurice Cheeks said. "We have a good basketball team."

Detroit (12-14) proved it with a nearly perfect game.

The Pistons dominated on the glass with a 55-40 overall advantage and a 20-9 edge on offensive rebounds. They matched the Pacers' shooting percentage of 43.2 percent, had one more 3-pointer and nearly an identical shooting percentage on 3s (35.3 to 35.0), outscored Indiana 44-38 in the paint and 22-14 on second-chance points.

For a Pacers team that prides itself on defense and rebounding, it wasn't even close to their best.

Detroit also finished with nearly as many blocks (seven) as turnovers (eight) and made five of six free throws during the final minute to hold off Indiana's last charge.

The most surprising element was that Indiana never tied the score in the second half and never took the lead on its home floor, where it had gone 11-0 before Monday night. The loss leaves the Pacers (20-4) with the second-best record in the league, percentage points behind Portland (21-4).

The Pistons knew that to end their six-game losing streak in this series and their nine-game losing streak at Bankers Life Fieldhouse, they needed to execute the game plan flawlessly. They did.

"We're forming an identity



Detroit Pistons forward Josh Smith, right, shoots over Indiana Pacers guard Rasual Butler in the first half of an NBA basketball game in Indianapolis, Monday, Dec. 16, 2013.

ourselves," said Smith, who went 13 of 29 from the field after meeting with Cheeks about getting more opportunities. "That has to be being a physical team, try to dominate the paint."

Indiana's uncharacteristic certainly helped the cause.

Paul George was 4 of 14 from the field, finishing with 17 points, nine rebounds and four turnovers. Roy Hibbert had six points and four rebounds. Even the energetic Lance Stephenson couldn't get his flustered teammates righted. Stephenson scored a career best 23 points and Luis Scola added a season high 18 points.

What went wrong for the usually unflappable Pacers?

George said the offensive rebounds got Indiana out of sync.

Others wondered if the Pacers may have been looking past Detroit, which has won just two of their last six games, and ahead to Wednesday night's re-

match with Miami. Indiana beat the two-time defending NBA champs on their home court 90-84 last week and have made no secret that they're out to get the Eastern Conference's No. 1 seed.

Indiana coach Frank Vogel quickly discounted that notion, calling Detroit a good team.

"I don't think we were looking ahead at all," Vogel said. "We've got to lick our wounds and see what we need to do better."

Whatever the explanation, these Pacers didn't even resemble the team that set one franchise record with its perfect 9-0 start and another by opening the season 11-0 at home. Oklahoma City is the last unbeaten team at home this season.

Detroit took charge quickly, using a 10-3 first quarter to take a 23-14 lead—a lead it never relinquished.

Even in the second half, when the Pacers typically dominate, the Pistons refused.

Detroit scored the last eight points of the first half, turning a 49-49 tie into a 57-49 lead. Then Smith scored Detroit's first eight points in the second half, and the surging Pistons took advantage of Indiana's growing frustration by extending the lead to 72-61 on Brandon Jennings' layup with 5:20 left in the third quarter. Jennings finished with 18 points and eight assists.

Indiana rallied again, getting within 79-73 after three, but the Pistons answered with a 7-2 spurt that made it 89-79 with 7:01 to go. Scola's layup with 4:55 remaining ended an 8-0 run that got the Pacers as close as 89-87, but the Pistons ran off five straight points.

Stephenson gave it one final push, hitting a 3 with 1:17 to go to cut Detroit's lead to 96-94, but the Pistons closed it out at the free-throw line.

"We had a lot of confidence coming in here tonight. We played Portland (Sunday) night in a game we should have won," Jennings said. "Tonight we knew we were playing the best team in the Eastern Conference and we were able to give them their first home loss."

Clippers 115, Spurs 92

In Los Angeles, Blake Griffin scored 27 points, hitting 11 of 15 free throws, and Los Angeles cruised past San Antonio 48 hours after completing a seven-game road trip.

Chris Paul added 23 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, and Jamal Crawford had 17 points in his second straight start for the Clippers, who repelled several threats in the third quarter to maintain their lead.

Tim Duncan had 17 points and 11 rebounds for the Spurs, whose four-game winning streak ended. Tony Parker limped off the court with a right shin contusion with 5:09 left in the third. He finished with eight points and six assists in 26 minutes.

DeAndre Jordan added 11 rebounds and Griffin had nine to help the Clippers control the boards, 43-36.

Nets 130, 76ers 94

In New York, Joe Johnson made 10 3-pointers, most in the NBA this season, and scored a season-high 37 points to lead Brooklyn over Philadelphia.

Johnson finished 10 for 14 from behind the arc, including 8 of 10 during an incredible third-quarter shooting performance. He passed the nine 3-pointers made this season by Jeremy Lin, who also did it against the 76ers' inept perimeter defense, and Stephen Curry.

Johnson scored 29 points in the third, his most in any quarter in his career.

Deron Williams had 13 points and 13 assists for the Nets, who led by as many as 42 and won for the fourth time in five games while playing without center Brook Lopez.

James Anderson scored 17 points for the 76ers, who lost their seventh straight overall and have dropped 11 in a row on the road since winning at Washington in their road opener.

Hawks 114, Lakers 100

In Atlanta, Kyle Korver sank three 3-pointers in Atlanta's dominant third quarter, Al Horford scored 19 points to lead the Hawks past cold-shooting Kobe Bryant and Los Angeles.

Paul Millsap had 18 points and Jeff Teague had 17 with 10 assists for the Hawks. Horford grabbed 11 rebounds.

Bryant made only 4 of 14 shots for eight points.

Nick Young led the Lakers with 23 points while making five 3-pointers. Jordan Hill had 21, Xavier Henry had 18 and Pau Gasol had 16, but no other Los Angeles player scored in double figures.

Wizards 102, Knicks 101

In New York, Bradley Beal's driving layup with 6 seconds remaining carried Washington past New York.

The Knicks didn't use one of their three remaining timeouts after Beal's basket. Carmelo Anthony took the inbounds pass, dribbled the up court and attempted a 3-point-

er that bounced off the rim as time expired.

Beal led the Wizards with 21 points, including their final seven as Washington erased a six-point fourth-quarter deficit.

Martell Webster added 30 points and John Wall 20 points for the Wizards.

Anthony finished with 32 for the Knicks.

Heat 117, Jazz 94

In Miami, LeBron James finished with 30 points, nine rebounds and nine assists despite sitting some of the second half after twisting his left ankle, Dwyane Wade added 27 points and Miami rolled past Utah.

It was Miami's 17th straight victory over a Western Conference opponent, the second-longest regular-season streak by an Eastern Conference team in NBA history. Boston won 20 straight over the West during a nine-month span of 1973.

Chris Bosh scored 20 points for the Heat, who moved within two games of Indiana for the East lead. Miami plays host to the Pacers on Wednesday.

Alec Burks scored 31 points for Utah, which got 17 from Derrick Favors.

Celtics 101, Timberwolves 97

In Boston, Jared Sullinger had 24 points and 11 rebounds, including a tie-breaking 3-pointer with 2:22 left that helped Boston Celtics hold off Minnesota.

Sullinger had 15 points and six rebounds in the fourth quarter, and Avery Bradley had 19 points for the game. The Celtics won for the fifth time in seven games to hold onto first place in the Atlantic Division despite a 12-14 record that would be 12th-best in the Western Conference.

Kevin Love had 27 points and 14 rebounds for Minnesota, which has not won in Boston since 2005. But he was 2 for 11 from 3-point range as the Timberwolves, who hit a season-high 12 3-pointers at Memphis on Sunday, went 8 of 29 from beyond the arc.

Kohl seeks to add partners for new Bucks arena

MILWAUKEE (AP)—Bucks owner Herb Kohl wants to add to the team's ownership group in hopes of building a new arena that he said would cement the team's long-term future in Milwaukee.

Kohl said Monday he hired a firm to help in the search for new partners, and that any new partners who are added will have to be equally committed to keeping the team in Milwaukee.

"I like to believe that bringing in new ownership ... if it's done in the right way, will reinvigorate the franchise and make our future in Milwaukee stronger and more secure," he said.

Keeping the team in Wisconsin's largest city would require a new arena to replace the 25-year-old BMO Har-

ris Bradley Center, also home to Marquette basketball and the Milwaukee Admirals of the AHL, he said.

"Without new investors and without a new facility, would we at some point lose the Bucks? Yes," he said.

Kohl, who recently retired after four terms as a U.S. senator, bought the Bucks in 1985. The team is frequently mentioned as a candidate for a move because of the age of its arena, but Commissioner David Stern said Kohl's decision shows he is dedicated to preventing that.

"With this announcement, Sen. Kohl continues his mission: to assure continuity of Bucks ownership by broadening its ownership base, and assuring that the fans of Wisconsin

will enjoy NBA basketball and other events in a new state-of-the-art facility," Stern said.

Kohl and Stern both said Kohl bought the team with the goal of keeping it in Milwaukee, and that remains a priority now.

Kohl said he hadn't identified possible partners yet, and that the process was only in its infancy. When asked whether he'd consider taking on a partner who demanded a majority stake, Kohl said it was too early to commit to specifics.

Kohl, 78, said he's in good health, but he knew he needed to plan for the organization's long-term future.

He also said he was willing to contribute some of his own wealth toward

the cost of a new stadium, and he hoped to secure private funding as well.

If that happens, the team would have a firm private-sector commitment that could provide a convincing case for the public to finance the rest, he said.

Kohl noted that Miller Park, where the Milwaukee Brewers play, is a fine facility but one that serves as little more than a baseball-only venue. And Lambeau Field, home to the Green Bay Packers, is also a one-use facility.

But the BMO Harris Bradley Center hosts 200 events per year, including concerts and family events, so a new stadium would benefit the entire community, not only the Bucks, he said.

Reporters asked whether potential partners would even want to invest in a team that couldn't consider a new area outside of Milwaukee, or in a

team that's struggled to be competitive in recent seasons.

Kohl replied that his team is profitable and its value has risen along with the values of every other NBA team. He declined to say exactly how much his team is worth.

At 5-19, the Bucks are the worst team in the NBA. But Kohl said they're a part of the community—a part of his community—and he wouldn't let them leave, even though he knew the franchise could be worth far more in a larger city.

"It would be a big loss for this community if we lost our NBA franchise," he said. "That would be a huge step backward, for not only Milwaukee but the surrounding communities."

"I don't want to see that happen. And so this asset is not for sale outside of Milwaukee."

Ravens beat Lions 18-16 on Tucker's 61-yard FG



DETROIT (AP)—Justin Tucker's powerful leg kicked the Super Bowl champions into playoff gear.

Tucker made six field goals, including a franchise-record 61-yarder with 38 seconds left that lifted the Baltimore Ravens to an 18-16 win over the Detroit Lions in a Monday night matchup with major postseason implications.

Ravens coach John Harbaugh chose to let Tucker try the longest kick of his career—by 5 yards—instead of going for it on fourth-and-8 from the Detroit 43.

"If they send me out there, they have reason to," Tucker said. "It's because they think I can make the kick."

Rookie safety Matt Elam sealed the victory with an interception—Matthew Stafford's third of the night—after raising eyebrows during the week by calling 28-year-old Calvin Johnson "pretty old" and saying the plan was to make the star receiver uncomfortable by getting physical with him.

Stafford threw a 14-yard touchdown pass to Joseph Fauria with 2:21 left, putting Detroit up 16-15. But the Lions were unable to make a 2-point conversion and couldn't prevent Baltimore from setting up its sensational kicker for his 33rd successful field goal in a row.

Tucker's kick went just inside the right upright and barely had enough distance—eight days after Denver's Matt Prater broke the NFL record with a 64-yard field goal.

"I definitely felt like I got a lot of leg into it, but it jumped up so high I thought I might have gotten under it," said Tucker, who mentioned in a television interview right after the game that his six field goals also benefited his fantasy football team.

Tucker, who hasn't missed a field goal attempt since he was 0 for 2 in Week 2 at Cleveland, has the NFL's longest streak since Matt Stover made 36 in a row for the Ravens from 2005-06, according to STATS.

"What can you say about Justin Tucker?" Harbaugh said. "When we got the ball there, I think at the 45-yard line, I said, 'Hey, are we kicking this?' ... He said, 'I got it.'"

Detroit (7-7) has hurt its playoff chances by losing four of its last five, falling out of sole possession of first place in the NFC North to third place behind the division-leading Chicago



Baltimore Ravens' Justin Tucker (9) kicks a field goal during the first half of an NFL football game against the New York Jets in Baltimore, Md., Sunday, Nov. 24, 2013. AP

Bears and Green Bay.

"This is a setback, no question," Lions coach Jim Schwartz said. "We had control and now we need help. We have to get two wins and let the rest shake out."

Stafford's three interceptions followed a troubling trend for the franchise.

He has 12 interceptions in his last five games. Not coincidentally, the Lions have been able to overcome those miscues well enough to win only one game during the slump.

Joe Flacco, meanwhile, didn't turn the ball over and made enough subtle moves in and around the pocket to get sacked only once. He has been sacked a career-high 42 times this season, but he stayed upright enough to move the ball into position for Tucker's big kick.

Flacco was 20 of 38 for 222 yards, including a 27-yard pass to Jacoby Jones to convert a third-and-15 from the Baltimore 28 on the game-winning drive. Jones had six receptions for 80 yards, and returned Detroit's last kick to the Baltimore 33.

Stafford was 18 of 34 for 235 yards with a TD and three interceptions—increasing his five-game total to 10—for a season-low 48 quarterback rating.

"This was certainly not my best game," he acknowledged.

Johnson had six receptions for 98 yards and dropped two possibly pivotal passes thrown his way in the first half.

"We just put every guy on him to try to stop him," Elam said. "It was no disrespect meant to Calvin. He's the best in the league, so why would I challenge him? Words just got stirred up."

The Lions started strong, with Reggie Bush running for a 14-yard touchdown on the opening drive.

Detroit, though, got in its own way as it often has this year.

Johnson dropped a pass that would've converted a third-and-15 deep in Ravens territory.

On the ensuing drive, Tucker kicked his first of three field goals in the first half—two of which were set up by penalties against Detroit.

Tucker's next field goal was set up by a pass-interference call against safety Don Carey.

Johnson couldn't catch another pass in Baltimore territory thrown at him late in the first half.

The Ravens took advantage of that mistake and one by Detroit's defense on the next drive.

Flacco threw an up-for-grabs pass on third-and-8 from the Lions 44 after avoiding a sack, and the incom-

plete pass was negated by Louis Delmas' helmet-to-helmet hit on Marlon Brown with 16 seconds left in the first half. That flag put the Ravens 15 yards closer to Tucker's field goal that gave Baltimore a 9-7 lead at halftime.

Detroit drove to the Ravens 31 on its first possession of the second half, but Stafford threw a pass behind Bush that was picked off by defensive end DeAngelo Tyson.

Baltimore went ahead 12-7 on the next drive on Tucker's 49-yard field goal midway through the third quarter.

The Lions scored on the ensuing drive—on David Akers' 40-yard kick—for the first time since the opening minutes of the game. The field goal came after Stafford's pass into the end zone fell incomplete. A replay showed Detroit receiver Kris Durham had his arm held on the play by Lardarius Webb, but there was no penalty flag for pass interference.

Tucker's 53-yard field goal—matching his previous season high—put the Ravens ahead 15-10 with 8:06 left.

Detroit responded with its best drive since its first one. The Lions might have caught a break from the officials when Brandon Pettigrew's catch was upheld after review.

Indians, closer John Axford agree to 1-year deal



CLEVELAND (AP)—After considering some in-house options, the Cleveland Indians may have found their new closer on the outside.

Free agent John Axford, who had 46 saves for Milwaukee in 2011 but has struggled the past two seasons, agreed to a one-year, \$4.5 million contract with the Indians, pending a physical. Axford is expected to undergo a medical exam Wednesday.

Also, the Indians signed free agent starter Shaun Marcum to a minor league deal and will give him a chance to win a starting job in spring training.

As long as there are no issues, Axford will likely close for the Indians in 2014, replacing Chris Perez, who was released on Oct. 31. Axford can earn an

additional \$1.75 million if he reaches performance bonuses.

Cleveland initially considered moving either reliever Bryan Shaw or Cody Allen into the closer's spot, but at last week's winter meetings manager Terry Francona said he preferred to keep the two reliable right-handers in their setup roles.

The 30-year-old Axford lost his closer's job last year with the Brewers and was traded to St. Louis in August. He blew six save chances in 62 games last season with the Brewers before they dealt him to the Cardinals, who used him in a late-inning role.

Axford had a 1.74 ERA in 13 games for St. Louis.

The 6-foot-5 right-hander had his best season in 2011, when he went 2-2 with a 1.95 ERA and 46 saves in 74 appearances. Axford had 106 saves in five seasons with the Brewers. He has a 1.42 ERA in

12 postseason appearances.

In addition to Axford, the Indians showed interest in free agents Joaquin Benoit, Grant Balfour and Fernando Rodney.

Cleveland's bullpen has been in flux this offseason. The club released Perez, a two-time All-Star, following a turbulent 2013 season. Cleveland lost valuable right-hander Joe Smith, who signed a three-year deal with the Los Angeles Angels.

Perez was eligible for salary arbitration, but the Indians decided to cut ties with him following a rough year. The colorful closer lost his job in the final week of the regular season as the Indians were fighting for an AL wild-card berth.

Perez, who had 124 saves for Cleveland, became an off-field distraction following his arrest in June on misde-

meanor drug charges.

Marcum's deal includes an invitation to spring training, where the 32-year-old right-hander will be in the mix to join Cleveland's rotation. Marcum would receive a \$1 million salary if he's added to the 40-man roster, and he can earn another \$3 million in bonuses.

Marcum, who has a 58-46 career record in the majors, was limited to 14 games—12 starts—this year for the New York Mets before he underwent season-ending shoulder surgery. He went 1-10 with a 5.29 ERA before having the operation in July.

Marcum has also pitched for Toronto (2005-10) and Milwaukee (2011-12). He was selected by the Blue Jays in the third round of the 2003 June draft. He pitched more than 150 innings in four of five seasons from 2007-11.

Bryant, Cowboys must bounce back again

IRVING, Texas (AP)—Dez Bryant made the rounds Monday trying to explain why he left the field early in Dallas' crushing loss to Green Bay.

The emotional receiver just couldn't watch the Packers take a knee three times for a 37-36 victory after the Cowboys led 26-3 at halftime. He was afraid he was going to cry in front of the cameras, so he says he took the tears to the locker room.

Now it's time for a two-game test for the Cowboys' biggest playmaker and the resolve of Tony Romo after his latest failure in key moments.

Beat Washington and Philadelphia to finish the season, and Dallas (7-7) ends a three-year playoff drought. Lose to the freefalling Redskins on Sunday, and the Cowboys might be eliminated before they even play their final game.

All this after they had a near-certain victory in hand against the Packers that would have pulled them even with the Eagles atop the NFC East and given them a chance to wrap up a playoff berth at Washington.

"The trend's not going to continue because we're going to do what we need to do," Bryant said Monday in a mostly empty locker room at the team's training facility. "This whole group in this locker room, we believe and we're going to keep working."

Bryant, who made similar headlines earlier in the season with a sideline rant during another deflating defeat at Detroit, was waiting for reporters so he could tell them that leaving with time still on the clock "was absolutely not right."

That was essentially the message in his conversation with coach Jason Garrett, who said his star receiver wasn't disciplined.

"It's difficult for everybody when things don't go well and he needs to understand how to handle that," Garrett said. "I think he'll handle that better in the future. He was very apologetic to me and was concerned about the situation."

Bryant's latest sideline moment didn't face as much scrutiny Monday as Romo's decision to check out of a running play before throwing an interception that gave Green Bay another chance down 36-31 with less than 3 minutes to go.

The Cowboys were in position to force the Packers to go most of the field in less than 2 minutes even if they didn't get a first down. Instead, Matt Flynn took over for Green Bay at midfield and led a scoring drive.

Another interception from Romo completed the collapse.

"I think in hindsight you would say that was the wrong decision, and Tony would be the first to tell you that," Garrett said of the first interception.

"Sometimes it's OK on second-and-6 to hand the ball off, take your lumps, and deal with the third down, force them to use another timeout, and then just work that situation out."

Now Romo has to find a way to lead a team that has given away two games, been blown out of two others and has a personal history of late-game and late-season failures.

Pacquiao can have the belt, says Mayweather

By CARLO PAMINTUAN
YAHOO PH SPORTS

After the World Boxing Council named Manny Pacquiao as the mandatory challenger to Floyd Mayweather’s welterweight title, the mega-fight that the boxing world has hoped for seemed closer than ever.

Mayweather has held the green 147-belt for a long time some people thought it might be important enough to the American fighter to sway him for a showdown with Pacquiao.

Mayweather killed this idea in an interview with Fight Hype. “Everybody’s talking about the title he’s (Pacquiao’s) the manda-

tory. He can have the belt! A belt don’t make me. A belt doesn’t define Floyd Mayweather,” said the fighter.

The undefeated fighter then questioned the selection of Pacquiao by the WBC.

“Here’s the Manny Pacquiao story. Manny Pacquiao was at welterweight. He lost to Timothy Bradley, no matter how you cut it, how you slice it, he lost to Timothy Bradley. He got knocked out by Marquez. He came back and went the distance with a lightweight,” said Mayweather. “And now all of a sudden, he’s the mandatory for my title.”

“I’ve been champion since 1998 to right now. I’m not 1 and



Boxing champ Floyd Mayweather, center, sits court side during the Sacramento Kings’ 112-97 win over the Dallas Mavericks in a NBA basketball game in Sacramento, Calif., Monday, Dec. 9, 2013.

2 in my last three fights. I’m 48 and 0. But like I said before, put him in front of me, I’ll beat him.”

He went on to state the reasons why he thinks Pacquiao doesn’t deserve a shot at him. Mayweather said that Pacquiao’s pay-per-view numbers have dipped while he has broken his own sales record. He added that his gate receipts against Saul Alvarez were also the richest in boxing history.

“It’s not just Floyd Mayweather’s bigger than a title. Floyd Mayweather at the level now, he can come out with his own world championship belt,” he said.

“In the future, I think my face is going to be in the belt on one

side. At one particular time you had Joe Louis and Muhammad Ali. I don’t know where my face will be placed there on the belt but I think in the future my face will be on the WBC belt or the WBA or the IBF.”

Mayweather currently holds all the aces if ever the two sides will open negotiations for a fight. Aside from Pacquiao’s sliding pay-per-view numbers and his recent twin losses, Mayweather understands that Pacquiao needs a fight against him to take care of his tax woes with the IRS.

On the other hand, the American fighter can dictate his purse against any fighter he chooses to battle.

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and passed it to Rocyl Ritual, who eventually kicked the ball out to Pantaleon.

NMI Contractor was given a chance to either tie the game with a 2-point field or win it with a triple after Melvin Cadiang muffed a pair of free throws in the last 13.7 seconds of the match and San Antonio committed the last turnover in a series of careless plays from both camps. Cadiang’s crucial misses came after Trevor Ogumoro hit a big triple from the left corner to cut the deficit to a deuce.

The NMI Contractor-San Antonio playoff game had a down-to-the-wire finish after the former bungled a 12-point lead, 28-16, in the second quarter.

Salem helped San Antonio cut NMI Contractor’s lead, drilling 6 of his 9 points in the second canto that ended with the southern-based team behind by only 3, 31-34.

San Antonio continued its recovery in the third and this time got a big lift from Bryle Alegre, who fired 10 points in that frame to give his team its biggest lead, 50-45. San Antonio was then stuck to 50 points in the remaining two minutes of the third, allowing NMI Contractor to move within 1, 49-50, entering the final canto.

San Antonio was still without a basket in the first three minutes of the fourth period, while NMI Contractor scored three early field goals off Don Brennan’s back-to-back layups and Galarse’ fastbreak shot to take a

55-50 advantage.

A timely timeout restored order back to San Antonio, as Alegre returned to the game and anchored the team’s rally anew. The mobile forward scored 7 points in the fourth quarter and went 3-for-4 in the foul line in the closing minutes of the game. He also teamed up with Salem in harassing Ogumoro at the back-court to force a turnover and set up Cadiang for two free throws that gave his squad a 5-point lead, 69-64, going into the last 23 seconds of the match.

Alegre finished with 25 points, while Jack Aranda added 13. Galarse paced NMI Contractor with his 19 points, while Ogumoro and Brennan contributed 17 apiece.

Meanwhile, the other playoff game between Island Floral and

Chinatown ended up with the former cruising to the 17-point win after the latter collapsed in the fourth canto.

Chinatown was behind by only 4 after the third period, 46-50, but bowed out of the competition, following its 6-point production in the playoff canto. No Chinatown player scored more than one field goal, as Shane Deleon Guerrero, Vince Iglecias, and Dixon Kwon were held to 2 points each.

In contrast, Island Floral drew enough contributions from five players in the fourth with Jun Tabora leading the way with his 10 points. Cecilio Bisana added 4 points, while three others chipped in at least one basket apiece. Bisana top-scored for Island Floral with his 20 points, while Tabora had 18. Deleon

Guerrero had 16 for Chinatown.

With the victory, Island Floral is paired against San Antonio in the second semis game tonight at 8pm. In the first semis match at 6:30pm, Docomo Pacific takes on giant-killer I Love Saipan, which eliminated two favored teams.

First Game

Island Floral 69 – Bisana 20, Tabora 19, Standish 8, Jugos 5, Lieto 4, Kaipat 4, Norita 3, Tobias 2, Teregeyo 2.

Chinatown 52 – Deleon Guer-

rero 16, Iglecias 12, Kwon 9, Lizama 6, Zapanta 5, Sacramento 2.

Scoring by quarters: 12-18, 32-28, 50-46, 69-52.

Second Game

San Antonio 69 – Alegre 25, Aranda 13, Salem 9, Espinosa 7, Cadiang 5, Caro 4, Villanueva 2, De Guzman 2.

NMI Contractor 67 – Galarse 19, Brennan 17, Ogumoro 17, Ritual 6, Inos 5, Pantaleon 3.

Scoring by quarters: 12-12, 31-34, 50-49, 69-67.

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stand up and tried to turn the stand-up fight to the ground, but to no avail, as Ramirez was too quick to move out of trouble and unleashed more punishing punches.

The Guam bet then cornered Pua and went for the kill, prompting referee Tony D’Angelo to step in and stop the fight. Pua had to be checked by the ring physician after the fight, as he sustained a cut near his left eye and lump on the left side of his forehead and his nose bridge started to swell.

Yatsui’s strong punches

also gave him a TKO victory against the returning Ryan “Trobz” Ngirbabul at the 1:21 mark of the second round of their light heavyweight bout. After exchanging wayward shots with Ngirbabul in the opening round, Yatsui started to hit his foe on the face in the second round. With blood oozing from Ngirbabul’s nose, Yatsui stopped throwing punches twice and looked at D’Angelo, signaling to stop the fight. However, D’Angelo was not ready to pull the plug on Ngirbabul, not until Yatsui cornered Ngirbabul for the third time and the latter haplessly stood there, taking more blows from his much younger foe.

The TKO victory was a big boost to the young MMA career of Yatsui, who had a thrilling punching match against Kevin “Big Stack” Patubo of Steam Slice during the Rites of Passage 15: Wrath of the Warriors in August this year. Yatsui lost the no-holds barred bout via split decision.

Meanwhile, Zalaka’s Allan “The Silver Bullet” Aguon, Tinian’s Paul Ayuyu, Marianas Elite’s John Tudela, and Spike 22’s Rob “Shiska” Alvarez also won their respective MMA bouts in Trench Warz 17.

Aguon recorded a tap-out win (arm choke) against

Pwang’s Garry “Disa” Ray at the 4:40 mark of the second round. Ayuyu prevailed in his debut against Trench Tech’s T.J. Sablan, gaining a TKO win at the 4:41 mark of Round 1, as he went on top of the latter and unloaded a string of punches. Tudela was also at the top position in his bout against Darren Michael and threw a flurry of strikes, prompting D’Angelo to call the fight at the 2:30 of the first round and hand the former the TKO win. D’Angelo also halted the Alvarez-Ben Flores duel after the Spike 22 stand-out locked in the latter on a rear-naked choke at the 3:34 mark of the opening round.

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odoro and Dimaano. Teodoro, who placed only seventh in last Saturday’s roll-off after getting 737 pinfalls, climbed up to second with his Day 2 total of 813 pinfalls. Dimaano, who recorded 200-plus pinfalls in three games (208, 223, and 229) in Day 1 and fell short of taking the top spot after getting 149 in Game 3, missed last Sunday’s event and dropped to third place. Bowlers are allowed to compete in both days of the tournament, but only the higher

score is counted.

The Top 3 finishers all averaged 200-plus pinfalls with Omechelang tallying 220 and Teodoro and Dimaano registering 203.25 and 202, respectively.

Eighteen others joined the King of the Lanes December roll-offs. The list includes Paul Pangelinan (783), Alex Castro (778), Roger De Guzman (776), Raymond Zapanta (775), Robert Talavera (774), Ronald Batac (763), M.J. Aldan (715), Raymond Angeles (708), Rusty Musca (699), Ariel Dumapit (697), Yong Woon Lee (688),

Edgar Abalos (668), John Jimeno (649), Tito Corpus (623), and Jerry Kaneshi (619).

In the Queen of the Lanes, Gloria bested 10 other female keglers. She took the victory last Sunday after carding 731 pinfalls and overtaking Day 1 leader Elena Soll, who collected 706 pinfalls last Saturday. Kathy Mersai, who won last month, also earned 706 pinfalls last Sunday to share the runner-up honors with Soll.

Gloria, who bowled in Day 1 and had only a third best score of 667 pinfalls, came back with a mission in Day 2 and accom-

plished it after a strong showing in Game 2. She logged 202 pinfalls in the second game to make up for her slow start (164) and added 169 and 196 in the last two to average 182.75 pinfalls and won by 25 pinfalls against Soll, who also competed in Day 2, but got only 688 pinfalls (fifth best)

Other female bowlers who joined the weekend event were Diane Chong (702), Yho Villavicencio (669), Tess Fabie (662), Lala Taitano (662), Myrna Santos (660), Ron Cal (654), Ron Cal (654), and Gigi Zapanta (598).

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BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

2013 UFO-Budweiser Open Basketball League Finals

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



The Hoopaholics' Maverick Itibus goes up for a layup against KB Market's Darwin Barbo, right, and Junar Guiab during their title game in the 2013 UFO-Budweiser Open Division Basketball League last Saturday



The Hoopaholics' Mel Manibusan, right, loses ball possession after bumping to KB Market's Junar Guiab.



The Hoopaholics' Alex Lauron attempts an undergoal shot against three KB Market defenders.



The Hoopaholics' Kelvin Fitial looks for a teammate to pass the ball to as he is tightly guarded by KB Market's Glenn Aquino.



KB Market's Leo Galarse pulls up for a corner jumper.



KB Market's Darwin Barbo, right, battles for the loose ball against the Hoopaholics' Alex Lauron.



KB Market's Pando Muleta fakes off the defense of the Hoopaholics' Maverick Itibus, left, while Marlon Cabrera steps in for help defense.



KB Market's Manolo Manalo gets away for a fastbreak layup.



KB Market's Ivan Devero pulls up for a bank shot.



KB Market players exchange hi-fives after pulling away from the Hoopaholics early in the fourth quarter.



**Pistons hand
Pacers first home
defeat, 101-96**
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Saipan Tribune Sports



**Ravens beat
Lions 18-16 on
Tucker's 61-yard FG**
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SAIPAN TRIBUNE

San Antonio ousts NMI Contractor



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

San Antonio's Jack Aranda, left, and Ezra Caro challenge the shot of NMI Contractor's Don Brennan during the third quarter of their playoff game in the DL Corp. caging last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

San Antonio clinched the last semis berth in the 2nd DL Corp. Invitational Basketball League after eking out a 69-67 win and eliminating NMI Contractor last Monday night at the Gualo Rai Basketball Court.

San Antonio came back from a 12-point deficit and kept its poise in the fourth quarter to join I Love Saipan, Docomo Pacific, and Island Floral in the Final Four. Island Floral earlier gained the third semis ticket after routing Chinatown in the first game last Monday, 69-52.

The battle for the fourth and last semis berth was not decided until the final buzzer with NMI Contractor missing the cut after Jun Pantaleon faltered on a desperation trey. Pantaleon could have moved closer to the basket for a higher percentage shot, as there was about four seconds left when he pulled the trigger

from the right key and the driving lane was wide open with San Antonio's defense sagging on the opposite side. Pantaleon's long jumper fell short and the ball dropped near the left baseline with Nevin Salem picking it up as time expired.

The NMI Contractor quarterback was forced to take the crucial shot, as his team had no timeout left to set up a play after the opposing parties exchanged turnovers in the closing seconds of the fourth. NMI Contractor had 8.6 seconds for its last offensive set and instead of receiving the ball, gunner Leo Galarse did the inbound



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Husband-and-wife pair prevails



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Percy, left, and Gloria Omechelang pose with their prizes during the brief awards ceremony for the Budweiser December King and Queen of the Lanes tournament last Sunday at the Saipan Bowling Center.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Husband and wife Percy and Gloria Omechelang did it again, recording double victories in the Saipan Bowling Association's Budweiser Queen of the Lanes Tournament for December over the weekend at the Saipan Bowling Center.

Percy, who took the King of the Lanes crown in May, while his wife notched the Queen of the Lanes tiara the same month, topped both days

of the December tournament. He knocked down 200-plus pinfalls in all four games (223, 210, 243, and 204) in last Saturday's roll-off to collect 880 pinfalls and lead by 72 pinfalls against Day 1 second-ranked Ador Di-maano (808).

The eventual December winner returned for the Sunday tournament and although he earned more than 200 pinfalls in only the first two games (224, 278) and logged 160 and 187 in the last two, his four-game total of 849 pinfalls still beat the scores of Lito Te-

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Yatsui, Ramirez pound foes



ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Gracie Barra's Jose "Young Blood" Ramirez connects to the ear of Vince "Sanity" Pua during the first round of their bout in Trench Warz 17: Night of the Champions last Friday night at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Guam's Jose "Young Blood" Ramirez won the fist fight in Trench Warz 17: Night of the Champions held last Friday night at the Royal Taga Hall of the Saipan World Resort.

Ramirez of Gracie Barra TRENCH TECH earned a TKO win at the 1:55 mark of the first round over Marianas Elite's Vince "Sanity" Pua in their 160-lb MMA bout. The visiting fighter attacked early, throwing a barrage of punches on Pua, who fell to the ground in the opening minutes of the first round. Pua managed to

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